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FATHER TOM BURKE

VOL. I.



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Believe me Ever Yours gratefully
Thomas Burke O.P.

THE LIFE

OF THE VERY REV.

THOMAS N. BURKE, O.P.

BY

WILLIAM J. FITZ-PATRICK, F.S.A.

AUTHOR OF 'THE LIFE, TIMES, AND CORRESPONDENCE OF THE RIGHT REV. DR DOYLE BISHOP OF KILDARE AND LEIGHLIN' 'IRELAND BEFORE THE UNION' 'THE SHAM SQUIRE AND THE INFORMERS OF 1798' ETC.

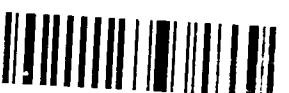
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VOLUME I.



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PREFACE.

THE name of one Irish Dominican Father was mentioned as likely to write the life of Fr. Burke, and it was only on finding that he had relinquished the idea that I determined to apply myself to the task. Although the good friar would have been in some respects better qualified, it is certain that no priest could spare from graver duties the time and labour I deemed it my duty to bestow upon the work.

To verify a few facts I have travelled from Dublin to Gloucester and from thence to Northumberland, not to speak of various other journeys. And here let me thank the Provincial of the English Dominicans for the facilities of access and cordial reception which he ensured to me in every Dominican convent in England. Some of my informants—Dr. Utili, amongst others—are since dead, and probably if I had delayed these personal inquiries, a few years more would have rendered this part of my task impossible.

I also beg to thank the Very Rev. J. T. Towers, Provincial of the Irish Dominicans. He promised help in the first instance, and that promise has since been amply fulfilled. If everybody who assisted me were to be named in detail, the list would be a long one. The contributions of Major Haverty however demand, perhaps, distinct mention because he wishes it to be known that they have been entered by him, for copyright, in America.

I took up the subject with diffidence, but it was encouraging to receive the assurance of one of the ablest Dominican fathers in Ireland, that the 'life of Fr. Burke could be best written by a layman, especially if that layman had been already the biographer of an ecclesiastic.' It was probably this view of Fr. Burke's character that led the Bishop of Galway to say, when unable to take the chair—October, 1883—in furtherance of the then contemplated memorial, that 'as Fr. Burke's mission was primarily with the laity, there was a special fitness in a lay gentleman taking the lead to perpetuate his memory.'

There may be some persons so strait-laced or so impervious to all sense of humour as to deprecate its existence in a priest. But, as Fr. Burke himself says, writing to Miss Rowe, 'There is no law that good people should be stupid. They may be *Sankey*monious without being *Moody*.'

To suppress evidence of his irrepressible humour would be to destroy the individuality of the man quite as much as if one were to ignore his great attribute of humility. The reader, therefore, must be prepared to see ample illustrations of both interwoven with the records of his more public career. But there was another life, of which the world knew nothing —the wonderful inner life of Fr. Burke—in attempting to depict which I have been aided by the men who knew him best.

Some may think that this book ought to be a grand panegyric—that too much of Fr. Burke as a humourist is shown and not enough of the great preacher whose appeals earned for him so high a reputation. But Fr. Burke's sermons are already familiar to all, while this pleasant side of his character will be new to many. At a public meeting in Dublin, convened to commemorate his fame and name, Judge O'Hagan spoke of the image of Fr. Burke himself rising

before him 'with his native laugh of playful scorn mocking at the idea of doing honour to him the poor, suffering, pain-struck friar. In no man whom I have ever known,' he added, 'was a contempt of this world and its honours more deeply rooted. He had it by nature as the concomitant of that priceless gift of humour with which he was largely endowed, and which led him with a keen and discerning vision to see through and rate at their proper value the objects of the vain desires of men. But he had it also from a far different source, from that grace of humility which his prayers had won for him, and which he felt to be the root and basis of all real good that man can achieve.'

It will be found that Fr. Burke, as far as possible, is made to tell his own life. Some things, of small import, no doubt, he sometimes mentions, but I was unwilling to exclude any personal reminiscence which Fr. Burke thought fit to record, the more so as his remarks are invariably permeated by a vein of that original humour which was so salient a characteristic of him.

I once thought that perhaps the better title for this book would have been 'Recollections of Fr. Burke by Himself and His Friends.' Until a year ago my part in it was little more than the laborious one of gathering illustrative *ana* from various sources both in America and nearer home. Of course I sought to prepare myself for the task by revisiting the various convents in which he had lived and laboured, and where the traditions of his inner life are tenderly enshrined.

Sometimes the fear has occurred to me that my details have been too full; but then it must be remembered that they largely describe traits and customs hitherto veiled from secular eyes, and therefore have their interest. Nor ought the words of Goethe to be forgotten, that 'On the lives of

remarkable men ink and paper should least be spared.' My ink, it is well to say at the outset, has not been expended in chronicling any very eventful career. Great as Fr. Burke was as an orator, he would have stood higher as a thinker had circumstances arisen to reveal the depth and resources of his mind. But it was not his lot to be mixed up with any great public questions; his history is little more than a personal one.

Readers who expect to find in this book any ambitious composition will be disappointed. The testimony of successive witnesses in an interesting inquiry makes no pretension to artistic style; but the evidence thus marshalled has its value nevertheless. If my purpose was to produce a full biographic essay like that of Sir J. Stephen on St. Francis, no doubt it could be done, though not so well. Still I think it might be more easily accomplished than to gather, as I have done, from so many sundered sources, the testimony of men whose knowledge on the subject had been previously confined to themselves.

After what I have said about the consumption of ink, it would be justly regarded as indefensible if I omitted any fact of personal importance. It ought, therefore, to have been mentioned at p. 166 of the first volume, had the matter then been communicated to me, that Thomas Burke, not having yet attained the canonical age at the date indicated in the text, it became necessary to obtain a dispensation from Rome before he could receive Priest's Orders.

May I also add—touching a passage in the book—that there is some conflicting testimony as to whether an ancestor of Fr. Burke was called MacAndrew or MacAuley.

W. J. F.

49 FITZWILLIAM SQUARE, DUBLIN.

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LIFE

OF

FATHER THOMAS BURKE.

INTRODUCTORY.

FATHER BURKE, during one of the ovations with which America hailed him as a great Irish patriot, surprised his audience by declaring that he was a very humble representative of the Norman invasion. He said this in reply to Mr. Froude, who had included among the rebel Irish chieftains the Burkes and the Desmonds.

The Norman arrived (Fr. Burke added). The Butlers and Fitzgeralds went down into Kildare, the De Burgs or Burkes entered Connaught. The people offered very little opposition, gave them a portion of their lands, welcomed them, and began to love them as if they were their own flesh and blood. . . . When they passed from the English portion of the Pale, and went out amongst the people, what is the first thing we see? They began to forget their Norman-French and their English, and learned to talk Irish. They took Irish wives, and were glad to get them, and adopted Irish customs; until we find, two hundred years after the Norman invasion, these proud descendants of William, Earl of Clanricarde, changing their names from Burke to MacWilliam.

Passing on to the reign of Henry VIII. he said that—

During all these years the Norman Desmonds, the Geraldines, the De Burgs, were the head and front of every rebellion. The English complained of them and said they were worse than the Irish rebels—that they were constantly fomenting disorders. Why? Because they, as Normans, were under the feudal laws, and the

King's sheriff could come down on them at every turn, with fines and forfeitures of the land held from the King. So, by keeping the country in discord, they were always able to defy the sheriffs, and they preferred the Irish freedom to the English feudalism; therefore they kept up these discords. It was the boast of my kinsmen of Clanricarde that, with the blessing of God, they would never allow a King's writ to run in Connaught.

This was the only occasion on which Fr. Burke claimed kinship to the lords of Connaught. A fine lady having asked him if he belonged to the Burkes of Glinsk or to the Clanricarde Burkes, he humbly replied that he was only the son of a poor baker. Once, indeed, he styled his father 'the Master of the Rolls;' but, as he jokingly added, he was a better hand at making a bun than a pun.

Throughout the long dark night of penal persecution the scattered descendants of the once proud Norman pursued the uneven tenor of their way, grasping by turns the staff of the pilgrim and the sword of the rebel.

My name of Burke, it is true, is a Norman name (he said), but it is a name that has come down to me, through seven hundred years, from sires and grandsires that knew how to bleed and to die for Ireland. Thanks be to God, a man gets more of his nature—of his heart and of his blood—from his mother than he does from his father; and my mother was a M'Donough, from Connemara, a stock that is as purely Irish as ever was that of Hugh O'Neill, or Red Hugh O'Donnell—as fiery in temper as ever St. Columbkille was, and he was a true Irishman—as poor as England could make them, and, God knows, that was poor enough—as proud as Lucifer, and as Catholic as St. Peter.[1]

His grandmother was a MacAuley, or, as it is spelt in Irish, MacAmhailgaidh. Mary MacAuley, according to the family tradition, was so beautiful a woman that Martin, commonly called 'Prince of Connemara,' got her portrait painted and hung in Ballinahinch Castle. The MacAuleys are said to have claimed kindred to the Martins, and to

[1] 'On Temperance,' at Newark, New Jersey, U.S., October 23, 1873.

have shared in the vicissitudes of their race. Fr. Burke's mother is described as Margaret MacDonough of Moycullen. Sir Bernard Burke[1] states that the estate of the Martins embraced Moycullen. The MacDonoughs were probably tenants of Dick Martin, famous for his boast that he had an avenue to his door thirty miles long. His last representative died in destitution many years ago.[2]

How the senior branch of the Connaught Burkes became Protestants like the Martins let Fr. Burke tell. Wentworth, afterwards Earl of Strafford, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, had obtained for King Charles I. from the Irish Parliament six

[1] *Vicissitudes of Families*, 1st ser. p. 68.

[2] The Martins had conformed to the creed of the State; and their house continued to be represented through successive generations by prominent, if not polished, men. Fr. Burke had preserved several traditions of Dick Martin, of which one may be cited to show the humour of both. The Dominican, when vindicating his countrymen against the charge of intemperance, said, in a lecture at Boston, U.S., September 22, 1872: 'No enemy of ours ever yet alleged that we were gluttons. Thanks be to God for that! The Irishman is a small eater, my friends. There was an Irish gentleman by the name of Colonel Martin, of Ballinahinch. He was over in England, and made a bet with an Englishman on this point. The Englishman said (he was a member of Parliament also): "You Irish are not worth anything; you are not able to eat as well as our people." Martin foolishly said: "I will bet you five hundred pounds that I can bring you a man from my estate who can eat more than any Englishman *you* bring." The Englishman took the bet readily. The Irishman was brought over, the Englishman also appeared—a fine, big, strapping man, with a mouth reaching from ear to ear, and a great long body and short legs—plenty of room—and, to put him in trim, he did not eat anything for two days. The poor Irishman was brought in—a ploughman, with the fine bloom of health upon his face—as well able to give an account of a *sceagh* of potatoes, with a "griskin" or a bit of bacon, as the best of you; but he was no match for the Englishman. They sat down to the work of eating. It was roast beef they got. The Englishman stood behind his man's chair, and the Irishman stood behind *his* man's chair, looking at them eating. After a while, the Irishman had got his fill, while the Englishman was only beginning to eat in earnest. There was a turkey on the spit roasting for the gentleman's dinner. Martin saw that his man was failing, and he spoke to him in Irish. "Michael," said he, "what do you think?" And the man replied, in the same tongue, "Oh, master, I'm full to the windpipe." As he spoke in Irish, the Englishman did not understand him, and he asked Martin, "What does the fellow say?" "He says," replied Martin, "that he is just beginning to get an appetite, and he wants you to give him that turkey." "Confound the blackguard," says the Englishman, "he shall never get a bit of it. I give up the bet."'

subsidies of 5,000*l.* each. Great boons and graces were promised to Ireland, but Strafford violated his pledge; 'and,' adds Burke, replying to Froude,

he instituted a Commission for the express purpose of confiscating in addition to Ulster—*that* was already gone—the whole province of Connaught, so as not to leave an Irishman or a Catholic one square inch of ground in that land. This he called 'The Commission of Defective Titles.' They were to inquire into the title that every man had to his property with the purpose of finding a flaw in it, so that they could confiscate it to the Crown. Strafford began by packing the jury. He told the jurors that he expected them to find a verdict for the King; and between bribing them and threatening them he got juries that found for him, until he came into my own county of Galway. And to the honour of old Galway, be it said, that as soon as the Commission arrived they could not find twelve jurors base enough to confiscate the lands of their fellow-subjects. What was the result? The County Galway jurors were called to Dublin before the Castle Council Chamber, and every man of them was fined 4,000*l.*, and put into prison until the fine was paid. Their property was taken, and the High Sheriff of Galway died in gaol because he was unable to pay the fine. Not content with threatening the juries and coercing them, Strafford told the judges they were to get four shillings in the pound for the value of every piece of property they confiscated to the Crown. Then he boasted publicly that he had made the judges attend to this business as if it were their own private concern. . . . Strafford instituted another tribunal called the 'Court of Wards.' It was found that the Irish people, gentle and simple as they were, were very unwilling to become Protestants. I have not a harsh word to say of Protestants; every high-minded Protestant must admire the strength and fidelity with which Ireland, because of her conscience, clung to her ancient faith. This tribunal was instituted in order to get the heirs of the Catholic gentry and to bring them up Protestants; and it is to this Court of Wards that we owe the significant fact that some of the most ancient and the best names in Ireland—the names of men whose ancestors fought for faith and fatherland—are now opposed to their Catholic fellow-subjects. It was by such means that the men of my own name became Protestants. There was no drop of Protestant blood in the veins of the dun Earl or red Earl of Clanricarde. There was no drop of other than Catholic blood in the veins of the heroic

Burkes who fought during the long five hundred years that went before this time.[1]

The penalty which followed the Martins overtook not the MacDonoughs, who, nerved with self-reliance, held on their course with industry and a good name. The brother of Margaret MacDonough, familiarly known among the peasantry by the name of Pedre Gow, continued to live at Moycullen until his death. Margaret had been led to the altar by a man who, probably without knowing it or bestowing a care on such thoughts, bore an historic name in Galway. This was Walter Burke, the father of the great Dominican. Heralds, when seeking to identify an ancestor, are always glad to find his distinctive Christian name transmitted through successive generations. 'In 1271,' writes Hardiman, 'Walter Burke, or the Burgo, died in the Castle of Galway;' and under a subsequent Walter Burke the trade of Galway is described as having greatly increased.[2]

Mr. O'Hart enumerates several Walter Burkes who flourished from A.D. 1332.[3] Walter is the Christian name of Lord MacWilliam Bourke in 1420.[4] It is also found in the ennobled branch of Baron Bourke.[5] Previous to and after the Williamite wars a further batch of Walter Burkes are named by Mr. D'Alton, some of whom sat in the Parliament of 1689, and others sat in cells as prisoners of war.[6] Others embarked in trade. In 1791 Walter Burke was Mayor of Galway.[7]

Another Walter Burke, having engaged in the Rebellion of '98, lost a little property which he held on the Quay of Galway. This man was the grandfather of Father Tom Burke. He left four sons: 1, Walter, father of the Domi-

[1] Fr. Burke's Reply to Mr. Froude, New York, November 19, 1872. Lecture IV.—'Ireland under Cromwell.'

[2] *Hist. Galway*, p. 259.

[3] *Irish Pedigrees*, p. 418.

[4] Burke's *Dormant and Extinct Peerage*, p. 66.

[5] *Ibid.* p. 67.

[6] *King James's Irish Army List*, v. 2, p. 136.

[7] Hardiman, p. 259.

nican; 2, Loughnan; 3, Edmund (now Captain Burke, who still lives and has given us these details), and, 4, Thomas, who died young.

Concanon was the name of our friar's maternal grandmother. If the Burkes were Norman, the Concanons were Celtic to the marrow. 'The ancient Milesian family of O'Concanon,' writes Sir Bernard Burke, 'derives its descent from Dermot, brother of Murias, 29th king of Connaught, in the ninth century.' But all such pride of ancestry our friar held in small esteem. However, just as the Child in the lowly house at Nazareth was related through Mary to the royal race of David, such points, though no matter for boast, are fair subject for history.

The date of Wat Burke's marriage with Margaret MacDonough cannot be fixed. Her daughters say that she never furnished any closer approximation to the time than 'we were fifteen years married when such and such an event occurred.' The contracting parties attached small importance to festive dates or social vanities. The oppressions of the Penal Code left all Papists only too glad to pursue in peace the humble crafts of their choice, while they saw the more ambitious vainly try to soar with the chains of disability clanking at their heels. Many became hewers of wood and drawers of water.

I have more than once asked myself (said Fr. Burke) what is it that condemns this race, whom God has blessed with so much intellect and genius, upon whom He has lavished so many of His highest and holiest gifts, crowning all with that gift of national faith, that magnificent tenacity, that, in spite of all the powers of earth or hell, has clung to the living Christ and His Church—what it is that has condemned this race to be in so many lands the hewers of wood and the drawers of water? *Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?* Where is the nation or the land that has not witnessed our exile and our tears?[1]

[1] Lecture on the Exiles of Erin, New York, May 22, 1872.

Some of Wat Burke's people became involved in the common vicissitude. When returning thanks for his health at a civic banquet in 1877, Fr. Burke said that he had replied to an English lady who once ridiculed his brogue, '"My father had it before me, but some of his progenitors had no brogue." "How is that?" said she. "Because they wore only traheens," said I.'[1]

Well, if they wore not brogues, perhaps their ancestor wore, like Malachi, a collar of gold.

In the 'Act to prevent the further growth of Popery,' the importance of Galway being garrisoned by Protestants is distinctly stated, and 'that no person professing the Popish religion shall or may after March 24, 1703, take any house or tenement or come to dwell in the city of Galway or its suburbs.'

Be this as it may, Wat Burke was found here early in the present century, always busily engaged in assisting the friars in their humble chapels, exercising his vote in favour of Bowes Daly, the friend of Grattan, and earning a reputation for baking good bread and for singing good songs.

[1] Brogue is the name of a heavy shoe. Traheens leave the naked sole unprotected, and are confined to the upper leathers.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND BOYHOOD OF NICHOLAS BURKE.

BROTHER THOMAS BURKE, called in the world Nicholas, the son of Walter Burke and Margaret MacDonough, who were joined in lawful wedlock, was born in the city of Galway, in the kingdom of Ireland, on the eighth day September in the year 1830, as appears from the credible testimony of the Rev. George Commens, parish priest of that town.

This entry, dated 'Die vigesima nona Decembris, anno 1847,' appears in the records of the old Dominican Convent at Perugia, where Nicholas Burke made his novitiate and solemn profession.[1] September 8 is the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, towards whom, as will be seen, he always manifested special devotion; and it is no less noteworthy that, while in his last illness he invoked 'Mary, Help of Christians,' he lingered until the Feast of her Visitation. His pious mother had often quoted the words of St. Bernard in the twelfth century, 'Devotion to Mary is a mark of predestination.'[2]

My mother had presentiment that I would be born on September 10, the Feast of St. Nicholas of Tolentine, and made almost a

[1] The entry is in Latin:—'Fr. Thomas Burke in sæculo vocatus Nicolaus filius Walthieri Burke et Margaritæ McDonough legitimorum conjugum, natus in civitate Galviæ in Hyberniæ Regno die octava Septembris anno 1830 ut constat ex fide Rev. Georgii Commens Parochi ejusdem.'

[2] Among other distinguished men born in Galway may be mentioned the eminent preacher Walter Blake Kirwan; Roderick O'Flaherty, author of the *Ogygia*; John Lynch (*Cambrensis Eversus*); Patrick d'Arcy, author of *Argument for Ireland* (A.D. 1641); James Hardiman, the historian of Galway; and the eminent chemist Richard Kirwan, who, like Walter Blake Kirwan, Dean of Killala, had been also a Catholic.

vow that in such case I should follow his 'order,' but if I turned out to be a girl, I was to become a Sister of Mercy.[1]

So long a period elapsed between the birth of the third sister and of Nicholas, that the parish stared when he appeared. Margaret MacDonough, of Moycullen, his mother, had been a woman of some beauty, and her appearance to the last was striking. Wat Burke had been a stooped elderly man as long as most Galway people could remember him, but noted for his vivacity, and he took with good humour the congratulations which greeted him on all sides after the birth of little Nicholas. It has been naturally assumed and generally asserted that Nicholas received that name in compliment to St. Nicholas of Myra, the patron saint of Galway; but it was the Augustinian St. Nicholas of Tolentine to whose patronage he was consigned. Such intimate relations subsisted between the Burkes and the Augustinian Friars of Galway that hopes of his adhesion to the order had long been cherished. The selection of his second name was due to the fact that Mrs. Burke had early evinced a special devotion to 'Good Saint Anthony.' When anything was lost by the neighbours they prayed her to use her known influence with that saint to effect its restoration, and the result was on the whole satisfactory. It is told in Galway by persons quite unconnected with her family that her last success was the discovery of some heifers which had strayed away from Mr. Ferguson, of Windfield.

That 'Father Tom' was christened 'Anthony' as well as Nicholas will be new even to Galway. How it came about must not be ignored, though the circumstance is one of sacredly domestic interest. Fr. Ralph, O.P., having visited Mrs. Burke during her decrepitude, she made some marked allusion to St. Anthony in course of conversation. 'I see you are a client of St. Anthony,' said the priest. 'Why

[1] Fr. Burke to Miss Edith Moore.

shouldn't I be?' was the reply; 'didn't St. Anthony send him to me?' She had indeed prayed that God, through the intercession of this saint, might manifest His power and goodness by sending a baby boy; and at last one came to fill the long disused nursery-chair and brighten by its prattle the heart and hearth of the old man.[1]

How old Mrs. Burke must have been when she gave birth to Nicholas may be inferred from his assurance to Fr. Reginald that she would describe to him scenes she had witnessed in the last century.

Two sons had previously died, to the parents' great sorrow, but it afforded them some satisfaction to think that if five of their children were born helots, Nicholas at least came into the world emancipated.

On April 13, 1829 (he records), emancipation was proclaimed, and seven millions of Catholic Irishmen entered the nation's legislature in the person of O'Connell. It was the first and the greatest victory of peaceful principle which our age ever witnessed; the grandest triumph of justice and of truth, the most glorious victory of the genius of one man, and the first great act of homage which Ireland's rulers paid to the religion of the people.[2]

The house in which Nicholas was born stood in Kirwan's Lane, off Cross Street, Galway, and is now reduced to ruins. The family afterwards removed to Dominick Street. 'My mother,' observes Fr. Burke, 'had been a Franciscan Tertiary, or a member of the Third Order of St. Francis. All the confraternities looked grave when she approached the altar

[1] Margaret Burke rather reminds one of Jane d'Aza, the mother of St. Dominic, who with a similar object used to go to an old monastery and pray over the tomb of a sainted abbot of that name. One night Jane d'Aza dreamt that the coming child—also a third son—was born, under the form of a dog, who, with a burning torch in his mouth, was setting the world on fire. This dream caused Jane intense sadness lest her child should be a turbulent man; 'so she prayed with increased fervour, and later it was revealed that the child would be a faithful watchdog of the Church, setting the world on fire by his burning faith.'

[2] Fr. Burke's Funeral Oration on O'Connell, Glasnevin, 1869.

of Hymen.' In point of fact, however, it is only cloistered Tertiaries who require leave to marry. How thoroughly her association with the rule of St. Francis spiritualised her mind and shaped the future of her son the sequel will afford abundant proof. 'Not content with sanctifying his sons in the cloister by his holy rules,' Father Burke says, 'the saint, in his zeal and love for souls, went out, and in the foundation of his third order instituted a tradition of sanctity and grace which were peculiarly his own.'[1] Unlike Jane d'Aza, no startling revelation was made to Margaret Burke—a matter-of-fact woman who paid no heed to dreams. But the night her tiny son was born—Fr. Eustace states—a distinct belief prevailed in the house that it was destined to hold in anointed hands the Banner of the Cross.

Mr. Kyne, a merchant of Galway, a man of robust common sense and decision of character, stood sponsor. Mrs. Burke chose Mrs. Keene as godmother because of her great holiness. After she had discharged her duties at the baptismal font, she said, as Miss Burke well remembers, handing back the baby to its mother, 'Here now is Father Nicholas for you.'[2] The baptism took place two days after his birth —namely, September 10, the Feast of St. Nicholas of Tolentine.

Those were not the days of feeding-bottles. Mrs. Burke, being unable to do much for the baby herself, made inquiries for a healthy nurse. At last 'Biddy,' a woman who seemed fitted to fulfil all requirements, was found and duly installed. In after years Fr. Burke's great fame afforded her natural pride; and during his ovations she made pilgrimages to see, and if possible to kiss, her lovely boy. Nor was it in Connaught

[1] Panegyric on St. Francis of Assisi, Oct. 4, 1884.

[2] 'Of what avail to me that a man pour water on my head and say, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," unless that baptism, that water, have sacramental influence, instituted by the Lord, endowed with a peculiar power for this purpose—the cleansing of the soul and be tinged mystically with the saving blood of the Redeemer?'—Fr. Thomas Burke.

alone that she followed his career thus literally. When Father Burke was giving a mission at Manchester in 1863, who should come upon the scene, radiant with 'love and pride,' but Biddy herself? Her love for Father Tom was increased by the fact that all her own children had died.[1]

Besides the two brothers deceased, three sisters had preceded Nicholas; and baby soon became 'the pet of the petticoats.'[2] The names Bridget and Mary—those of his surviving sisters—he ever after regarded with peculiar tenderness. Lecturing on St. Patrick in America, he spoke of devotion to Mary as a great feature of Ireland's Catholicity.

> They called her in their prayers '*Miden dheelish*,' their darling Virgin. In every family the eldest daughter was a Mary; every Irish maid or mother emulated the purity of her virginal innocence, or the strength and tenderness of her maternal love. With the keenness of love they associated their daily sorrows and joys with hers; and the ineffable grace of maiden modesty which clung to the very mothers of Ireland seemed to be the brightest reflection of Mary which had lingered upon the earth. Oh, how harshly upon the ears of such a people grated the detestable voice which would rob Mary of her graces, and rob the world of the light of her purity and the glory of her example! Never was she so dear to Ireland as in the days of the nation's persecution and sorrow. Not even in that bright day, when the Virgin Mother seemed to walk the earth, and to have made Ireland her home, in the person of St. Bridget, was her name so dear and the love of her so strong, as in the dark and terrible time when, church and altar being destroyed, every cabin in the land resounded with Mary's name, and invoked in the Holy Rosary the great devotion that saved Ireland's faith.

Until he became a regular schoolboy the child was not distinguished for precocity. We do not hear of him, as of St. Dominic, that he would creep out of his warm cot and lie on

[1] Fr. Albert Buckler, now Prior at Haverstock Hill, was his companion in this mission. He tells us that Fr. Burke seemed not less delighted to see Biddy and gave her, on leaving, a nice present.

[2] Honor, of whom anon, is dead. Miss Bridget Burke, now of Galway, and Mary, married to Mr. Patrick Ferguson, of Windfield, survive.

the ground as a commencement of his ascetic life. Whether our babe felt so inclined, certain it is that Biddy, his nurse, would not permit it. He heard from her, however, some little incidents to which he made allusion at St. Gabriel's Church, New York. Speaking of what he described as the excess of credibility, or Irish superstition, which makes it so easy to realise the unseen, he asked—

> What could be more beautiful than some of its forms, as for instance when the mother rocks her infant in the cradle and it smiles in its sleep? There is a mysterious ray of gladness and sunshine that it never remembers, but which certainly passes over the innocent young soul. Now the Irish mother rocking her child, as soon as she sees it smile, bends down, kisses the child, and says it is an angel that has come to whisper to her infant something of the joy it itself feels before God. How beautiful the idea is; how delicate is the thought and the sentiment; how motherly is the act and the faith which that act proves! We believe as Catholics that the child baptized becomes as an angel of God; that no sin nor approach of sin is there; that until that child comes to years of reason, and consequently is capable of committing a personal sin, it is in the eye of God even as one of His angels. This we Catholics believe, because we believe in the efficacy of baptismal regeneration. There is no fear of a Catholic priest, as I have known other ministers do, take ten or twelve children in a district and baptize them all together by dipping his finger into the water and giving them a sprinkle. There is no fear of a Catholic priest denying baptismal regeneration and then fighting his bishop on it, holding it as the truth.

His sisters describe him in childhood as so puny that his mother never regarded him in any other light than as a loan from God. This delicacy kept him a good deal indoors. A kinswoman of his, now a Sister of Charity, informs us—and he himself told the same to others—that he used to equip himself from his mother's wardrobe, and taking his place in an upper window discourse fine music from some instrument that puzzled the street, but which was by turns a shoe-horn and a comb. The neighbours were so much interested that they called to ask the name of the lady on a visit with the

Burkes. Fr. Burke told Mr. Hodgens that sometimes he would put his mother's muff on his head and personate a Grenadier drummer.

By degrees his nerves and muscles strengthened, and the irrepressible vitality of his nature began to assert itself beyond domestic bounds. It will be remembered that Galway carts have projections behind almost rivalling in length the shafts in front. He told Mr. M. O'Flaherty, J.P., that when he observed an empty cart leaving the town he flung himself upon the projection; up went the shafts, 'and if,' as he said, 'the horse had any kick in him, a sensation scene took place, all the attention of the driver became directed to his horse, and in the midst of the confusion the cause of it—convulsed with laughter—would decamp.' Another confession was that he threw a mouse into the churn of an incurable scold. This act so roused the ire of her household that half the parish was searched for the offender, who, with the agility of a leprecaun, eluded grasp after grasp.

To the Pastor of Galway Fr. Burke mentioned that sometimes, when Mrs. Burke happened to call her husband from another room, he, mimicking his father's voice, would answer for him, and generally contrive to introduce some pert or grotesque word which could hardly fail to rouse retorts. Anon, still personating the father, he would call out to his mother from the foot of the stairs some protest against an imaginary act, the more irritating because undeserved. One word led to another, much to the glee of the concocter, and, indeed, also of the father as soon as he became alive to the trick.[1]

[1] Other members of the family besides Wat Burke showed that marvellous humour which descended to our hero. Augustus Burke, familiarly known as 'Augy,' performed many tricks on his townsfolk, which Mr. Lynch often heard the Dominican beg his father to recount. So confidently is the following attributed in Galway to 'Father Tom's boyhood' that we at first expressly gave it to him in this page; but rigid tests at last dethroned it:—

A tinker named Greene lived in a cellar and exhibited at his door for sale crubeens, lobsters, and eggs, not of the freshest. Like Bill Sykes, a dog usually attended him. One day when 'Bounce' was meandering, Augy Burke tied to

'Nicholas was gifted with the power of being able to catch any form of sound, and reproduce it to perfection,' writes Canon Burke. 'From the crow of a cock to the cackle of a hen, from the volubility of the turkey to the chirp of the goldfinch, he puzzled the neighbours by his vocal tricks.' In this respect, at least, he did not resemble St. Guthlac, of whom it is recorded: 'Non variorum volucrum diversos crocitus, ut adsolet illa ætas, imitabatur.'

A community of nuns at Galway, who had survived the rigours of the Penal Laws, possessed some energetic habits which nowadays would not be found in their more gentle representatives.

From my boyhood (said Fr. Burke) I had a keen sense of the ludicrous. When acting as an acolyte something occurred which stirred my risible faculties. One of the Dominican nuns brought me into the Convent and gave me a beating. Sobbing I went home to my mother: 'Oh! my blessed boy,' she cried, 'did the Lord's anointed lay their hands on you?'[1]

He remarked that on a subsequent occasion he had been beaten in error by the same nun, and she said, 'I am very sorry for the mistake, Nicholas, but your own good sense will tell you that often when you richly deserved a whipping you escaped.' Mrs. Burke finally felt grateful to the

his tail a can and then hastened to the tinker's to watch the result. Soon the dog was in full speed, followed by boys, with wild halloos, flinging missiles. Down rushed Bounce into his master's den, overturning lobsters, cans, kettles, crubeens, eggs, and dust-pans. The tinker, suspecting Augy Burke, hurled a lobster at his head, and amid renewed uproar chased him to the Claddagh.

Galwegians to this day give 'Father Tom' the credit of the following incident; but on strict inquiry it appears that of this Augy Burke was also the hero. Old Wat Burke, while tears streamed down his cheeks with laughter, used to tell his son for the hundredth time the adventure of 'Uncle Augy:'—

A large heap of manure remained exposed in one of the back streets of the ancient town. The owner was urged to remove it, but in vain. Burke on a market day affected to sell it, and an amusing altercation subsequently took place at the heap between two men who had brought carts, each believing himself the buyer. A crowd collected, and in the midst of the row the owner appeared, demanding to know 'Who dar sell his dung?' 'I'd almost say that is he,' replied one of the buyers, pointing to Burke, 'only the man who sould it to me was blind of an eye.'

[1] When telling this story Fr. Burke sometimes said 'the Spouse of the Lord' —which is more likely to have been the phrase Mrs. Burke used.

energetic sister. Some years before his death Fr. Burke, his mother, and the nun met. The incident he himself described. 'You ought to throw yourself on your knees in gratitude to this good nun, who by her correction has helped to make you what you are.'

Wat Burke was the senior of his wife. He was a little thick-set man, and his son, after silently studying him for some minutes, asked, 'Was it his dancing, or what, that took your fancy, mother?' His family, however, say they never saw him dance, though his small feet seemed naturally formed for 'steps.'

Music was Wat's ruling passion. His worthy friend Andrew Lynch has often seen him, his hand reposing in his breast, slowly follow a ballad-singer from street to street, and completely absorbed in the song. And it is to be feared that while the burning words of the minstrel lured him onward, the staff of life was sometimes suffered to burn in the oven.

In the father's footsteps the son followed. His sister Mary tells that Fr. Burke, when one day hurrying to keep some important appointment, happening to hear a minstrel play an air from Meyerbeer's *Prophète*, in the streets of Rome, stood spell-bound, and lost his appointment.

When we consider the nature of music (says Fr. Burke), the philosophy of music, do we not find that it is of all other appeals to the senses the most spiritual; that it is of all other appeals to the soul the most powerful; that it operates not as much by the mode of reflection as in exciting the memory and the imagination, causing the spirit and the affections of men to rise to nobler efforts, and to thrill with sublime emotions and influences? And, therefore, I say it is of all other sciences the most noble and the most godlike, and the grandest that can be cultivated by man on this earth.

He went on to say that he was not speaking of the laboured compositions of some great master—of a wonderful Mass or a grand oratorio—works that appeal to the ear refined and attuned by culture—works that delight the critic.

I speak of the song that lives in the hearts and voices of the people, the true national minstrelsy that comes down traditionally from remote ages, until, in a more cultivated era, it is interpreted into written characters, and then the world discovers beautiful melody in the music that has been murmured in our mountain valleys for hundreds and thousands of years.

Speaking of the passion of Irishmen for music, and how it helped to relieve care, he said:—

Over and over again, on a Saturday, when the market day in Galway had closed, and when perhaps the evening was wet, I have seen some poor man returning home, walking along by the side of his little cart; and whilst the miserable horse was often hungry and inclined to stand on the way, I have heard this poor man crooning an old song, the beast with ears hanging down wending its weary way.[1]

Wat Burke did not know any musical instrument scientifically, but he taught his daughter Mary by ear a large *répertoire* of fine Irish airs, which she still performs on the piano. He was delighted to welcome the humblest musical talent. A poor man used regularly to wait upon him to play on the flute what is described as 'the most doleful of airs.' Wat sat out the performance quite as much from a sense of duty as from pleasure. One day he was sitting at his shop door, when a piper began to play. 'It strikes me,' said Wat, 'that it is thirty years since I heard you play; where have you been since?' 'In America.' 'And in all that time have you learned no new air?' 'Not one,' said the piper. As years advanced and decades gathered he became a little absent—finally a little childish, and tears fell as some plaintive song, familiar in boyhood, caught his ear. He sang many Irish ditties,

but in no song (observes Mr. Lynch) was he more effective than in a ballad which narrated feelingly the fall of Dr. Butler, Lord Dunboyne, whom he had seen officiate as Roman Catholic Bishop of Cork. He would describe him, mitre-crowned, singing the High Mass at St. Finbar's, and on a subsequent occasion conducting a lady from his

[1] Speech at the concert for St. Xavier's Schools, Liverpool, October 18, 1880.

carriage whom he married to perpetuate the peerage of Dunboyne. His recantation, the failure of all his plans, and his final return to the bosom of holy Church, were all sung with touching pathos by old Wat Burke.

'The Jolly Miller' and 'The Miller and his Men' were very favourite songs fifty years ago. Some people seem to have supposed that so musical a baker must necessarily be a miller, and we have heard persons who visited Galway describe his big wheel near the bridge, suggestive of that in *La Sonnambula*. But that wheel was not Wat Burke's, and he was a miller only so far that he often bought the rough grain in the market and then sent it to the mill to be ground.

He was a large-hearted man, and his generosity to all was restrained only by the limitation of his means. In his wife he found a worthy ally. After her marriage she became a member of the Sodality of Mount Carmel at the Augustinian Friary, and daily heard Mass there. Galway then, as now, abounded in professional beggars, but her motto was, 'Give unto all, lest he whom you refuse should be Christ.' When going out she would bring a bag of coppers with her, and 'feed the beggars the whole way.'

How different was all this to the cruel trick which Colonel O'Malley played on the beggars of Galway! They had often worried him, and at last he told them to meet him at his hotel next morning at ten. They assembled in their hundreds, some borne on the backs of others, all full of fervent praise of O'Malley, only to find the heartless humourist on the balcony of the hotel with a Bible in his hand, and swearing by its contents that while he lived he would not give one of them a penny.[1]

[1] We owe to Dr. Burke, Local Government Board Inspector, this and some other curious traits of a bygone type of humourist. He adds that O'Malley had no sooner spoken than the surging crowd, as if by one impulse, fell on their knees and cursed him. Whenever the mail-coach containing O'Malley would stop to change horses all the beggars thronged to the windows, some trying to arouse his attention by prodding him with their horny fingers. He would rapidly raise the glass, and by squeezing their fingers compel them to withdraw. One old crone

To the solemnity of Margaret Burke her worthy husband presented a marked contrast. Miss Bridget Burke informs us that such was the congeniality of disposition between old Wat and his son that they seemed more like brothers. Often she has seen them walking together, the son laughing immoderately at the sire's stories, and *vice versâ*. 'You'll be the ruin of that boy, teaching him such folly; why not show him an example of gravity and decorum?' became a daily remonstrance with old Mrs. Burke. This sort of intercourse continued for years; and when in the zenith of his fame Fr. Burke visited his aged father, he would amiably encourage the more than twice-told tales by counterfeiting fits of laughter.

It will be remembered that Margaret Burke's race—the MacDonoughs—hailed from Connemara. Fr. Burke told the Rev. D. Mulcahy that her relatives, whenever they paid her a visit at Galway, always knelt down and recited with her the 'Rosary' in Irish, and that their very name Donoch was derived from 'Domnach,' signifying 'Sunday.'

Andy MacDonough acquired by his gravity quite a judicial repute. He lived at Killeen, in the barony of Dunkellin. No Petty Sessions Court was held nearer than Spiddal, a distance of nine miles. A dispute about a goose once arose, which cost the litigants 10*l.* owing to adjournments of the case. It was finally agreed upon by the people that henceforth Andy MacDonough should decide all disputes. He regularly held his Arbitration Court, the chair supported on either side by the local priests, Fathers Quinn and O'Dwyer.[1]

tied a cloth round her wrist and protruded her hand for a coin. It held its position stoutly. 'I swear by this book,' he said, 'that never——' 'Don't swear,' she said, 'your honour's word is as good.'

[1] Fr. Quinn—now the esteemed Pastor of Oranmore, to whom we owe this fact—is the cousin of Fr. Burke.

How is it that the Burkes, unlike the MacDonoughs, were noted for pleasant buoyancy? Those who have heard the lecture of Dr. Geikie, F.R.S., on 'Types of Landscape: their Origin and Influence on Human Temperament and History,' may seek in his arguments for some solution of the divergent natures which marked the two races. The Donochs, or MacDonoughs, hailed from the Irish Highlands. 'The Highlander,' says Dr. Geikie, 'found himself pent up in

'I remember a time in my life when not one word of the English I now speak to you was on these lips, but only the sweet old rolling Celtic tongue that my father and mother spoke before me.' These words occur in Fr. Burke's lecture at New York on St. Laurence O'Toole. Knowing how generally English was spoken at Galway, this statement led us to make some inquiry. 'Nicholas,' writes Canon Burke, 'was put out to nurse at Oranmore, where he remained until, at least, his fifth year. He heard no language spoken but the Irish, and his childish prattle was lisped in it.' He eventually acquired a command of the vernacular; and we learn from one of his American interviewers that 'among the poems which he first committed to memory were the most popular of Archbishop MacHale's Irish translations of the Melodies.' Luckily he did not live in the days of Edward III., when, as he tells us in replying to Mr. Froude,

Lionel, Duke of Clarence, the King's son, came to Ireland and held a Parliament, and passed, among other laws: 'If any man speak the Irish language, or be found keeping company with the Irish, or adopting Irish customs, his lands shall be taken from him and forfeited to the Crown of England.'

Galway suffered forty years ago from the inconvenience of having no water supply for the houses of the citizens, unless by the purchase of bucketfuls from men who fetched it through the streets. A wild member of the craft was known by the nickname of 'Ma-the-bucket.' Whenever Nicholas Burke or

narrow glens and surrounded by sombre mountains, and had to make out his existence from a stony soil in a wet and cheerless climate. The natural characteristics of the race had been consequently replaced in his case by a serious tinge of melancholy deepening into gloom and a sternness of character. Those influences were even traceable in the features of different people. In the Highlands the grim-set, clenched aspect of the faces was suggestive of strife with the surrounding elements. He had been told that where the country was very flat, the people all had a broad grin more or less stamped on their faces, and the reason given for it was that the roads were very straight, and people meeting each other recognised one another so far off before they met that the smile of recognition gradually developed into a grin, and this had become confirmed in the features of the inhabitants all about the place. The characteristics of landscape had also affected the poetry and the literature of districts.'

others shouted out this nickname, it stung him to fury. Laying down his buckets on the pavement, and seizing up stones, clods, turf, and sometimes even bad fish, he hurled them after those who manifested disrespect. He was quite regardless whom he hit, and the innocent sometimes suffered while 'the lads' escaped. Indeed, it more than once happened that while 'Ma' was directing a fusillade in front, his arch-foe got rapidly round by a *détour* to the rear, and upset the contents of his buckets.

Another odd character was a cobbler who worked at a stall exposed in the street. He was known only by the nickname 'Egypt,' and Burke when passing always greeted him by it. The cobbler would start up, drop the brogue he was hammering, and, seizing his great knife, rush down the street in pursuit. These scenes, in addition to the comicality of a pantomime, bore at times the glow of actual battle. 'By the people,' Fr. Burke said, 'I was more than once threatened with the Galway Curse.' 'And what might that be?' 'Itching without scratching,' was its rude translation.

Some of the queer people that thronged Galway in those days were idiots whom the county asylums have since received. Fr. Burke told his cousin the priest that, interested by his father's stories, and retaining himself piquant recollections of several queer fellows, he, long after, accosted a survivor of the band, and asked what had become of 'Dick.' 'Ah, yer reverence,' was the reply, 'he left Galway about the same time as yourself and another fool.'

There were other strange characters and customs which Fr. Burke must be allowed to describe. Condemning at Hartford, U.S., a boast often heard—'This is a free country, where we can all do as we like'— he said—

When I was a young boy, a beggar in the West of Ireland was in the habit of threatening people. He would meet a man or a woman in a lonely place, and walk up and say: 'Give me something, or else——' (drawing off in a menacing attitude). One day a burly fellow

as big as he was met him. The beggar drew up as usual and said: 'Give me something, or else——' 'Or else what?' thundered the other. 'Or else I shall have to go without it,' said the beggar, viewing the strong shoulders before him. In those days beggars were the only free men in the land. One of them went into a farmer's house, and sat down to the table and helped himself without saying as much as 'By your leave.' He stayed several days, till finally the farmer said: 'As you have taken so much liberty, I will take the liberty to kick you out,' which he did.[1]

Fr. Burke went on to say that liberty does not consist in every man doing what he likes. Liberty consisted in every man, high or low, having his own rights, knowing them, and being protected in the exercise of them. He added that he would rather live in Russia with three rights than in a country where every one could do as he pleased.

Scattered through his discourses, delivered in many lands, homely pictures are found which may be pressed into the mosaic of his life. That the innocently wild boy was yet an observant boy, and could think deeply, is shown in some of those retrospects. In the midst of his grandest orations his voice would suddenly drop to trace some grotesque image. After describing the nobility of man, made in the image and likeness of God, he drew a picture of the victim of drunkenness.

Stand over him, my friends, and look at him as he lies there. Speak to him. You might as well speak to a corpse. Reason with him. You might as well reason with that table. Ask him to look at you. There is no light in his eyes. Did you ever see a man stupidly drunk and look into his eyes? I remember, when I was a little boy, seeing, at home, in the kitchen, in Galway, hanging up on a hook behind the kitchen door, a hake, that my mother had bought the day before. I was curious enough to go up and look at its eyes. It had been dead about twelve hours. That same day I saw a man drunk, lying in the gutter. Boy as I was, I said to myself, 'The hake's eye again!'[2]

Lecturing on the 'Evils of Ireland and their Remedy' at

[1] 'On Civil and Religious Liberty.'

[2] 'Drunkenness the Worst Degradation,' New Jersey, September 17, 1872.

Harlem, U.S., October 14, 1872, he alludes to 'his grandfather,' who seems to have been in arms in '98. His hearers were democratic, and as usual he sought to enlist the sympathies of his audience.

I remember, when I was a boy, hearing at my own home the whole story, from an old grandfather, who was himself a strong man in '98 and saw the whole thing pass before his eyes; and he said these words—that the united effort would have been successful, but 'the boys' got drunk. It was the drink that filled the river Slaney with Irish dead bodies on the day when they made their last stand on Vinegar Hill.

Three days after, lecturing at New York, he said: 'My fathers before me were the sufferers, and I myself have beheld the remnants of their sorrow.'

The dark era of the Rebellion Wat Burke remembered with that mingled tear and smile in his eye which descended as a little heirloom to his son. Lecturing on the Church at Brooklyn, U.S., in 1872, Fr. Burke mentioned:—

There was a fool in the county of Galway in '98, the 'year of the troubles,' and General Merrick went down to Galway and commanded the troops. They were hanging the people then. The fool saw the General ride up with his cocked hat and the white feather in it, at the head of his troops. The fool made a cocked hat for himself, and put a white feather in it. Then he walked around the town and said he was General Merrick.

Father Burke told this in reply to an evangelical opponent who, denying Catholic infallibility, claimed himself the right to guide, to lead, and to teach.

It is about this time that he is described by his kinswoman the nun as going into the street as a ballad-singer, his features disguised by a slouched hat, and his purpose kept a secret from the family. He moved on slowly, carolling the while, followed by a small crowd, until he at last halted before the parental homestead. Wat Burke, a man inferior to his wife in acumen, happened to be at his door, and was so moved by the ditty that, not suspecting who the recipient was, he pressed some money into the singer's hand.

His next freak was to counterfeit the appearance of one of the grotesque cripples with which Galway, even to this day, is full. But his sister Mary is not aware of his attempting the trick on anyone except his father, along the step of whose door he stretched himself one evening when the old man was seen in the distance wending his way home.

'Nicholas must go to school,' said Mrs. Burke sternly; and accordingly he was placed under the preceptorial care of Mr. Magrath. This man, who partook of the characteristics of Mr. Wackford Squeers, liked to inflict corporal chastisement on his pupils. Learning and blows were with him almost convertible terms. 'If I cannot drive it into your head, I'll drive it into you somewhere,' was a phrase of his as stroke after stroke fell on the screaming victim.

Old Magrath and his eldest son (writes Mr. Winston Dugan) were two very queer-looking men—awkward, ugly, ungainly—real old types of the pedagogue. Their school was in Cross Street. Burke was constantly mimicking and playing tricks such as he well knew how upon these men.

Among the schoolboys was Mr. J. J. Brady, now C.E., Galway.

One day (Mr. Brady says) Magrath struck with a blackthorn a youth named Bodkin. Before a second blow could fall a small ink-bottle was hurled against Magrath's nose. The name of the child who threw it did not fully transpire, but it is my full impression that the lucky interposition was accomplished by Burke.

The circumstances under which Burke left Magrath's school must not be concealed. This man had a dog of unprepossessing aspect. By dint of dividing his lunch with it, however, Burke was able to take liberties which others dare not attempt. An apartment off the schoolroom, known as 'the masther's sanctum,' contained a pile of slates and books, surrounded by ink jars, and some eatables so placed that they might be out of the dog's reach. Nicholas got half a dozen school slates, and passing a string through the orifice of each,

tied them to the tail of Magrath's dog. Away ran the animal with deafening din until, penetrating the sanctum, he overturned with a crash the crazy pyramid just described. Straightway Mr. Magrath sallied forth, his brows black as midnight. Citing Nicholas before his terrible tribunal, he ordered him to be stripped and to be placed on the back of Magrath, jun., in order to afford facilities for the application of the rod already in pickle. Retreat was hopeless. But young Burke was equal to the occasion. He placed firmly between his teeth a pin, to be used as a wasp wields his sting. He was duly hoisted—a blow fell heavily. The sufferer seemed to kiss, not the rod, but the back of the neck of Magrath's son. The latter screeched, dropped his burthen, and ran down Buttermilk Lane yelling, followed by Nicholas, the schoolmaster himself, and most of his pupils.[1] Nicholas fled on, got into Lombard Street Churchyard, thence into Cross Street, Magrath still in pursuit, till Burke dodged him by rushing through a drove of pigs going towards the quay, and afterwards escaping by some of the lanes of Middle Street.

If, as has been seen, two of the tricks hitherto fathered on our hero failed to stand the searching inquiry we prosecuted on the spot, there are fully half-a-dozen in which an act of faith may be made.

The child one day observing an empty cart which had just delivered its load of turf, jumped into it, and, whilst the owner was taking a drink, beat the donkey into a canter for the sake of a jaunt. When Nicholas returned to the starting point the driver struck him across his face with a whip. The boy proceeded homeward, debating in his mind how best to punish this cruel carter.

A citizen resided near the Burkes who did not hesitate to comport himself haughtily towards the hope of their house.[2]

[1] This is given on the authority of Father Kernan, an esteemed priest of Galway, who retired from the mission and joined the Patrician Brothers. He was present when the strange scene occurred.

[2] Hardiman tells us, in 1820, that the Galway merchants were famous for

He had just got his hall-door painted a gaudy colour, and the boy resolved to give him and the turf man a touch at the same time. He watched for the carter until he again happened to enter the town with turf. Affecting to have been sent, he offered the man one shilling less for his load than was at first asked, and said he would not put him to the trouble of carrying it in by baskets, but that he might upset his load at the hall door, which, he added, could be easily distinguished by its brilliant hue. The rude man from the bogs overturned his load right against the freshly varnished door, raising at the same time a cloud of bog-dust. Under cover of this, Nicholas fled with all his might, while the master of the house rushed out, collared the carter, and lashed his back soundly for what he regarded as a most exasperating outrage. Meanwhile Nicholas was in full speed, his heart beating wildly, when on turning a corner he ran full tilt against the imposing person of Father Rush, the Prior of the Dominicans, and who will be found later on receiving him into their Order. The boy struck headforemost in very much the style that a negro charges his foe. 'What! Nicholas,' exclaimed the good friar, as soon as he had recovered his breath from the effects of the collision, 'this looks badly. What means yonder crowd, and wherefore such anxiety to get away?'

The boy having made a clean breast, Father Rush took him by the hand into his mother's house. He told her with great gravity all that had occurred, and urged her to keep Nicholas somewhat more within doors. Father Rush had no sooner retired than Mrs. Burke brought her son into an inner room, where, locking the door, she knelt down and began the prayer, 'Direct, O Lord, our actions and carry them on by Thy gracious assistance,' &c.

'When I saw my mother enter the room,' said Fr. Burke as he told the story, 'make the sign of the Cross, and solemnly

pride; but he adds, 'This empty quality is gradually disappearing'—one, we may add, characteristic of the old Spaniards.

invoke the light of the Holy Ghost to direct her, I knew I could expect no mercy; I never got such a beating as that one directed by the Holy Spirit, and I have never forgotten it.'

'I got another flogging,' he said, 'simply because I was not like Eustace Murphy.' This was the model youth in Galway. He was senior to Nicholas, and, at an early age, entered the ecclesiastical state.

Bodily fears were now succeeded by supernatural ones. When delivering a pleasant lecture in England he referred to the Irish faculty of realising the unseen, from which arose the excrescence of superstition. He spoke of the fairies and *pcshouges* which plagued the lives of Irish children. If a green tuft of grass was seen in a meadow, not only the children who were foolish, but also the old men and women would tell you that 'the good people were dancing there.' If a child seemed wasting away, the mother would be easily persuaded that it was not her child at all that was there—that, in fact, the 'good people' had spirited away her beautiful baby and left this sickly child in its place.[1]

In the year 1830 Brother Paul O'Connor, armed with the 'God speed' of Bishop Doyle, proceeded from Tullow to Galway, and there founded the Brotherhood of St. Patrick, an educational body having for its object the preservation of youth from the contagion of vice. Mrs. Burke placed her boy under the special care of Brother Paul. It is right to add that though the instruction of the poor was ostensibly the mission of the monks of St. Patrick, a special arrangement was made whereby Wat Burke acknowledged handsomely the care bestowed upon his son, and in point of fact, with the exception of Magrath's, no other school existed at this time in Galway.[2]

[1] Lecture at Liverpool for All Souls' Schools, October 5, 1880.

[2] It has been said that, notwithstanding the atmosphere of decorum breathed under the monastic rule of Brother Paul, Burke's nature still remained untamed. Mr. Dugan, who knew him well in early life, has furnished an anecdote on the authority of another which we are inclined to think may be a confused version of the

'I was the monitor of Nicholas Burke in Brother Paul's school,' writes a man who has attained in another walk high distinction. 'He was then not more than nine years of age, and to my mind a singularly handsome boy. We did not meet again until 1864 in Rome, when I became sincerely attached to him.'[1]

Replying to the Galway address and presentation on his return from America, in March 1873, Father Burke said :—

I have been in many climes and have visited many lands, and nothing that I ever heard could be compared in value to the words of wisdom that fell from the lips of Brother Paul O'Connor.

And again :—

In some of the great cities of America that I visited I often witnessed with regret the indifference to religion of people of other countries. Not so with Irishmen. As soon as it was announced that Father Tom Burke was to preach, every Galway man came to hear him ; and when the faithful Irish people thronged around me, and received my name with applause, I valued it only inasmuch as it

incident at Magrath's school. 'A few days ago I was speaking to one of the brothers attached to the monastery in Galway, who confirmed the reports of young Burke's boyish freaks. One day Burke played some practical joke so audacious that Brother Paul, the Superior, pursued him through the rooms and from thence into various ramifications of streets.' On my submitting the story to the Vice-Guardian of the Patrician Brothers at Galway, he was disposed to doubt it—firstly, because during the many years he was associated with Paul O'Connor he never heard him allude to any such incident ; and secondly, the attitude imputed to him was entirely at variance with his character and system. A notice of Fr. Burke, written by Mr. Edmund O'Flaherty, who knew O'Connor well, says that he was 'a monk of much learning, love, and patience, the three great characteristics of a teacher.' Whether he would have deserted the several hundred pupils who comprised his school for the purpose of pursuing one through a labyrinth of streets, is a question which, though it may be argued on the probabilities, cannot be settled by any appeal to direct evidence. We have been given the privilege of access to the papers of Brother Paul O'Connor, and have found several remarkable letters from Dr. Doyle. One thus concludes :—

'Be always lenient to the children, and not angry even with the perverse ; don't hope to make them all good, nor require the practice of much piety from any of them, lest the yoke of religion become heavy to them ; rather permit than encourage the devotions of those whom nature may dispose to be fervent. In all things have a firm reliance on God.'

[1] Letter of Marquis Oliver, San Francisco, November 7, 1883.

proved the love they had for the Catholic Church, of which I am a priest, and for our dear mother Erin, whose child I am; but when they would crown me with honour, I laid that crown first at the feet of Almighty God, and then at the feet of Brother Paul O'Connor.

This school was, indeed, the cradle of his career.

Among the proudest recollections of my life (he continues) is that I was monitor of No. 7 in this school, and that month after month I came to Brother Paul to answer the inquiry made in a gentle whisper, 'whether I had attended my monthly confession and communion,' and how he taught me that next to the God that made me I should love the Old Land of my birth.

Part of Paul O'Connor's work was to organise a society known as 'the Aloysian,' for the practical training of youth in Christian morality. This young Burke joined in 1841, and it may be mentioned that since its foundation it has given sixty priests to the Church. How Paul prospered so signally in his good work seems little short of a miracle. When he first arrived in Galway, his old pass-book records, 'Cash in hand one shilling!' This institute throve so marvellously that in 1846 we find him able to instruct and feed 1,020 boys.

It was stated in different obituaries of Burke, and even in a separate *brochure*, that he attended the High School of Erasmus Smith. This statement gave some annoyance to Fr. Burke's family, and they desire to give it emphatic contradiction. So uncompromising were his mother's principles, that she would be about the last to place her son in any school not under Catholic supervision.

Now, in order that education may be bad (he says), it is not necessary to teach the child anything bad. In order to make education bad, it is quite enough to neglect the religious portion of the education. By that very defect the education becomes bad. And why? Because such is our nature—such the infirmity of our fallen state—such the atmosphere of the scenes in which we live in this world—such the power of the agencies that are busily at work

for our destruction, that, educate the child as carefully as you may, surround him with the holiest influences, fill him with the choicest graces, you still run great risks that, some day or other, the serpent of sin will gain an entrance into that young soul in spite of you. How much more if that young heart be not replenished with Divine grace! How much more if that young soul be not fenced round by a thousand appliances and a thousand defences against its enemies! And thus do we see that the principle of bad education is established the moment the strong religious element is removed.

Thus he spoke at New York in a lecture on 'The Catholic Church.' Another, which has never been reprinted outside that city, furnishes an important anecdote. This anecdote we find translated into Dutch in a memoir of Fr. Burke, 'by W. Van Nieuwenhoff, 'sHertogenbosch, W. Van Gulick, 1882.'

Both here and in Ireland we have to bear the common burden of State education, which is hard, especially when we cannot avail ourselves of it. Not only in America, but in the old land, it is too bad that Catholics cannot send their children to the Queen's College or the Model School; indeed, I remember a man coming into our house when I was being educated, and he said to my mother, 'A great fool you are, paying 12*l.* a year for a classical education for your son, when, if you send him to the Queen's College he will be educated for nothing; and if he gets a prize he will bring you home twenty pounds.' 'He will bring me home twenty pounds!' exclaimed my mother. 'Not for ten thousand pounds would I allow him to cross the threshold of their Queen's College; for the lessons that I want my child to be taught are that he shall know his duty to God and his duty to me; and there he won't be taught either one or the other.'[1]

My recollections of Fr. Burke date from a very early period of his life (writes Mr. Charles Dugan in a document whose important details are reserved for later stages of this narrative). At that time Galway was not well supplied with schools for Roman Catholics, and all boys of that persuasion who pretended to receive any sort of liberal education met together at one school.[2]

The scarcity of good schools was one of the direst effects

[1] 'The Catholic View of Education.' Lecture at St. John's College, Brooklyn, U.S.A.

[2] Letter of C. W. Dugan, Esq., Adelaide House, Clonmel, October 6, 1883.

of the Penal Code. Fr. Burke, in his lecture on 'The Genius of the Irish People,' says: 'The worst law that ever England made was that enacted during the penal times, by which it was declared that if an Irish Catholic father sent his son or daughter to an Irish Catholic school, that man became guilty of felony, and liable to transportation.'

Dr. Johnson has said that 'not to describe the schools or the masters of illustrious men is a kind of historical fraud by which honest fame is injuriously diminished.' The reader must, therefore, breathe a little longer the close atmosphere of the schoolroom.

At a time when Tyrone Power was drawing crowded houses to see him play 'Dr. O'Toole, the Irish Tutor,' a veritable Dr. O'Toole opened school at Galway, and acquired popularity and support. But the Galway pedagogue was a distinguished D.D., and afterwards became Vice-President of the Queen's College. His school, which Nicholas Burke is now found attending, was the most ambitious academic step ever attempted in Galway.

There (observes Mr. John J. Brady, C.E.), Burke made the most marvellously rapid progress, leaving all his schoolfellows far behind. He ran through the Greek grammar at a stroke. He was brightness itself, and in all studies threw us into the shade. His good nature was equal to his genius, specially in showing those less gifted how to construe and master their often tough tasks. Bryan O'Toole, the brother of the principal, taught him French, and was a highly perfumed *petit maître*, whom Burke nicknamed 'Briney.' A boarding-school was attached, and on the common playground Burke was the life and soul of his companions. Football and hurling were favourite games with him.

He greatly amused us by his stories and powers of mimicry, and even the Sanctuary was penetrated by his searching eye. One day he would be Bishop O'Donnell singing the 'Ite, Missa est.' On the next he would treat us to a sermon from Dr. Kirwan, marked by all the peculiarities of style that rendered him the most powerful preacher of his day. But his personation of Dr. O'Toole amused us most because it came thoroughly home to us all. In assuming those various

characters, his power was such that the very shape of his features wholly changed, and we forgot in the contemplation of those matured portraits the fragile figure which produced them.

Galway priests describe Bishop O'Donnell as a splendid vocalist. The boy, therefore, found as grand an exemplar in that line as was Kirwan in the other.[1]

In reading these descriptions of our friar preacher in boyhood, one is forcibly reminded of the great Dominican, St. Vincent Ferrer.

The boys of his own age (we learn) looked up to him more as a master than an equal. St. Vincent, having great facility for imitation, would frequently assemble his companions, and, assuming the gestures and manners of the different preachers in the town, would repeat parts of the sermons he had heard, together with stories, which were certain to interest his youthful audience.[2]

The aptitude for learning described by his schoolfellows would seem to have been hereditary with the Burkes. Some of his race, too, had become priests, and in sight of the gibbet had preached the Gospel. More than one had passed through the vicissitudes of the poor scholar. Of these a glimpse is caught in a lecture on the 'Irish People,' delivered in New York :—

In spite of imprisonment and fines, the Irish people, who never have been serfs, refused to be the slaves of ignorance. In the worst day of our persecution and misery, there was one man who was always respected next to the priest; and that was the 'poor scholar,' with a few books under his arm, going from one farm-house to the other, with a 'God save all here!' He got the best of the house, the best bed, the cosiest place in the straw-chair. And the children were all called in from the neighbouring houses and from the village.

[1] Fr. Mullins, now Dominican Prior of Galway, attended in 1843 at some examinations which were given at Dr. O'Toole's academy. Among the boys called up, Fr. Mullins was particularly attracted by the answering of 'Wat Burke's son.' He was examined first in science and afterwards in Homer, Cicero, Virgil, and Sallust. The boy proved himself *facile princeps*. Bishop O'Donnell cordially congratulated him when presenting successively fourteen premiums.

[2] *Dominican Saints*, p. 73.

He could spend a week from one house to another. Each was turned into a school-house at times. Hence I have known men—old men of my own family—who remembered 1782. I have seen them, when a child, in their old age, and these men, brought up in days of penal persecution, with its enforced ignorance, were first-class controversialists. They knew how to read and write; they knew Dr. O'Gallagher's sermons by heart. No swaddling minister could hold his ground five minutes before them.

Another American lecture, which took a fling at the law of divorce, said:—

The seed to be planted—the formation of the soul—is in the mother's hands; and therefore it is that the character of the child mainly depends on the formation which the mother gives it. The father is engaged in his office, or at his work, all the day long. His example, whether for good or bad, is not constantly before the observant eyes of the child as is that of the mother. All depends upon the mother; and it is of vital importance that that mother should blend in herself all that is pure, holy, and loving, and that she be assured of the sanctity of her position, of which the Church assures *her* by the indissoluble nature of the marriage tie.

Jealous lest the vocation which she hoped to see develop should be in any way imperilled, his pious mother watched over him like a guardian angel. The organ of the Irish priesthood and people, in an able notice of Fr. Burke's career, stated that he possessed a wealth of irrepressible and even boisterous mirth, that made the wiseacres shake their sapient heads and mumble that 'the contemplated vocation of the youth was not what nature had intended him for.'[1]

[1] Mrs. Manning, in a *brochure* of some hundred verses, makes the same statement:—

'They shook their heads and looked most wise,
And more than one foretold
That, in the flashing of those eyes,
As he some story told,

'They read vocation not so high,
Nor deep, nor broad, nor long,
As that he chose for bye-and-bye
From mother's words and song.'

This passage has been reprinted in a *brochure* largely circulating, and by some readers has been misunderstood. Lest worse should be inferred, it is well to make a completely clean breast as regards those pranks which pained his mother. He smoked, and until five years before his death continued a smoker. He performed perilous passages as a swimmer. It is even said that one day he wandered from school to fish in Lough Corrib, and when asked if he caught anything, replied—'Not until I got home.' He could thrash belligerent school-fellows, and continued to play practical jokes spiced with good-humoured mischief.

Overflowing with vitality (writes Mr. Sherlock), he thought nothing of swimming, in conjunction with the more daring of his young companions, across the arm of Galway Bay that dips into the land close by the schools of Erasmus Smith, and on more than one occasion made the perilous passage in the depth of winter. [1]

He told his American friends that when playing among the ships in Galway Bay he would climb up the ladder-rigging, go out on the yard-arm, and drop into the sea.

More than once Nicholas incurred chastisement for going to see a faction fight. When lecturing at St. Gabriel's, New York, he spoke of the distinction won by Irishmen on every battle-field in the world, adding—

Out of this very courage of our race there spring certain defects, just as we see that fairies, ghosts, and superstitions of that kind may even grow out of our exaggerated faith. I grant you that an Irishman is a little too pugnacious. I myself have seen a fellow in

[1] Fr. Burke, to the end of his life, was fond of swimming in the open sea. While thus employed fine thoughts swam through his surging brain. Thus, in his preface to the *Gold and Alloy* of his friend, Père Monsabré, we find: 'The ordinary man barely escapes sin, like a weak swimmer rising laboriously on a wave; the saint dashes aside the temptation with a fury of energy, like a strong swimmer, who rises on the crest of the billow with brow erect and scarcely smitten with its spray.'

Again, when lecturing on the 'Church and Science,' at the Rotunda, Dublin, in 1874, he says that 'there are two ways of going into the water. One man sneaks in, which is very uncomfortable. Another man gets upon a rock and boldly takes a "header." You will permit me, with your kind courtesy, to take a "header" into my subject this evening.'

Ireland trailing his coat after him through the streets of Galway, flourishing his stick, and asking everybody that passed, as a special favour, if he would not be kind enough to stand on the tail of it. But, after all, just as we see that there are some beautiful features attaching to their superstition, so there are fine features attaching to their courage, which often leads them to make a fight for the sake of the fight. For instance, nothing is more common in Ireland, when a row is going on at a fair, when sticks are seen in the air and men are tumbling about on every side, than for a quiet, peaceable farmer, coming along with his scythe on his shoulder, to throw it down, quietly take off his coat, roll it up and place it on the roadside, then taking his stick, and, after looking on for a moment to see which side was winning, which was the weaker side, would then plunge into the thick of the fight and disable the first head that came to him. At any rate, it was a comfort to think that he hadn't the meanness to take the side which was winning. That is not an Irishman's way. When a side is winning because there is generally little fighting the other side want to run, but at Galway they go in for fighting and not running.

The same lecture—which has been overlooked in the printed collection—reveals him in a more interesting attitude.

Oh, how often have I spoken in Ireland with the father and the mother, left there in their old age, when the two or three strong, stalwart sons went away from them to America! Oh, how often have I seen the eye brighten with pleasure when they told me that on such a day a letter would come that would bring them a little money and a little relief! They were enabled to lean with perfect confidence upon the heart of that far-away, because that heart was the generous, manly heart of a Catholic Irishman.

A large crowd was collected, in 1878, in front of the Jesuit Church at Galway, previous to the great sermon which Fr. Burke delivered on that occasion. An intelligent-looking old man surprised those about him by saying, 'There was a time when if I could have laid my hand on the same youth you would have had no sermon here to-day.' He was a retired nailer, and explained that his workshop stood in a recess partly under the road, to which he could only descend by a ladder-like gradation indented in the edge of a small

cliff. Nicholas Burke got a basket of rotten apples, with which from the road above he continued for ten minutes to pelt the nailer vigorously, leaving upon him marks seemingly sanguineous. The nailer declared that he never felt his gorge rise to such a pitch before or since. He placed in his furnace a rod of iron, with which when red hot he determined to scorch and sear his tormentor. Before this could be accomplished the ammunition of apples was exhausted, and the boy withdrew to achieve on another field some fresh feat.

If brought to bay he was well able to hold his own. One of his schoolfellows at Dr. O'Toole's, Mr. Morris, now at the head of a Government department, and who himself supplies the anecdote, having indulged in some chaff, Burke gave him a sound beating. This incident created quite a local sensation. But the father of Mr. Morris took the matter so good-humouredly that when Wat Burke went to apologise for the assault committed by his son, old Mr. Morris said, 'Devil mend him! Why wasn't he able to box his share?' Both boys became thoroughly attached friends. Mr. Morris states that Burke was the first who taught him to smoke. Much confidence and intercourse subsisted between them in after-life, and we owe to Mr. Morris different details elsewhere embodied.[1]

What ascetic, however exacting, would expect us to add that as his career advanced he disciplined and controlled such Celtic impulses as seemed to clash with the second Beatitude? But strangers thought that they could discern a something in his face that, humble as he was, seemed at times to say, 'Nemo me impune lacessit.' In 1873, at Galway, when receiving from his early instructor, Brother

[1] In 1873, when about to visit Rome, he asked Burke if he could give him an introduction. 'I know one right good fellow,' he replied, 'and here is a letter you can give him.' 'I thought he alluded to some genial Bohemian,' adds Mr. Morris, 'and I never supposed he could have meant Cardinal Howard until I glanced at the superscription; and the way in which his Eminence honoured the introduction showed how sincerely he respected Father Burke.'

Paul O'Connor, an address of congratulation, Fr. Burke gave a touch of the humour inseparable from his nature:—

I recollect, when describing the Irish character in some of the great cities of America, I said that an Irishman is usually a tall, sinewy fellow, about six feet high, kind-hearted and generous, but ever ready to strike a blow for the old faith and the old country. This trait of the Irish character is well known in America. I remember, when travelling in a railway carriage near the banks of the Mississippi, about 5,000 miles from this spot, there was a great big fellow in the same carriage, who was employed on one of the levees of the Mississippi. A Kentucky Yankee, who was sitting near him, said, in my hearing, not knowing I was an Irish priest, 'Look here, friend, you'd want to look sharp and mind what you say now; that ere fellar, I guess, is an Irishman, and them sort of fellars can't stand a word about the Pope or about their own country, so you'd better look sharp now, and mind don't say a word against the Pope or the Irish, or I guess that chap would fetch you a lick over the bridge of the nose while you'd be looking about you.[1]

Anthony Trollope describes his own school days as wretchedly unhappy, partly owing to 'an utter want of that juvenile manhood which enables some boys to hold up their heads.' It was doubtless the possession of the opposite qualities that made Burke's later school days so enjoyable. Over and over again he is described in memoirs as a 'wild boy;' but he knew where to draw the line. Fr. Ralph, O.P., and himself had been boys together in Galway. To Ralph he said of a local contemporary, 'I never liked that boy, and I shunned him after one day he asked me to stray into paths which were distasteful to me.'

There was one influence that he had been taught to seek regularly, and which of necessity restrained any divergence from the straight path. This he had learned from Brother Paul as naturally as a child learns to walk.

The Catholic feels (he said) that the eye of God is upon him. He is told *that*, every time the Catholic Church warns him to

[1] Reply to the Address of the Aloysian Society at Galway, March 17, 1873.

prepare for confession. He is told *that*, every time his eyes, wandering through the church, rest upon the confessional. He is told *that*, every time he sees the priest with his stole standing there, and the penitent going in with tearful eyes, and coming forth beaming with joy. He is told this in a thousand ways; and it is brought home to him by the precepts and sacraments of the Church at stated times in the year. The consequence is, he is made to believe that he is responsible to Almighty God; and therefore this obligation, creating a sense of responsibility, rouses and excites a watchfulness of his own conscience. The man who feels that the eye of God is upon him will also feel that the eye of his own conscience is upon him. For watchfulness begets watchfulness. If the master is looking on whilst a servant is doing anything, the servant will endeavour to do it well, and he will keep his eye upon the master whilst the master is present. So a soldier, when he is ordered to charge, turns his look upon his superior officer, whilst he dashes into the midst of the foe. And so it is with us. Conscience is created, conscience is fostered and cherished in the soul by a sense of responsibility which God gives us through the Church and through her sacraments. It follows that the Catholic man, although in conscious freedom, is conscious that he must always exercise that freedom under the eye of God and under the dominion of His law; so that in him, even although he sin for a time, the sense of freedom never degenerates into positive recklessness or license.[1]

Some results of the yoke that he bore from his youth peep forth in the following recollections of the first cousin of our great Dominican, Mr. Michael Burke, now of Dominick Street, Galway :—

During all our intercourse in childhood, though he got the name of being a wild boy, I never heard him utter one naughty word or breathe any exclamation approaching a curse—a practice then much indulged in by smart youths of progressive tendencies. In the midst of all his little tricks and mimicries his vocation for the Church was to me clearly visible. I remember him on one occasion calling to take me out to visit the various altars which, on Holy Thursday, are always handsomely decorated; and how, when, having viewed the first and second, I was leaving the chapel to complete my inspection,

[1] Fr. Burke, on 'The Catholic Church,' delivered at Brooklyn, U.S.

he read me a little lecture, which, being my senior, he was warranted in doing, that I should always kneel down and offer up a short prayer on such occasions.[1]

From all this and more it may be safely assumed that what Fr. Burke said of St. Dominic applied equally to himself.

No thought that might shame an angel crossed his mind. In his fifteenth year he was as pure of soul as when he was carried from the baptismal font with the water of Regeneration still glistening upon his infant brow.[2]

At Dr. O'Toole's school (his cousin continued) he carried off all the premiums so sweepingly that a movement was about being started by the pupils to protest against such monopoly. In the year 1847 Nicholas and I separated to pursue our widely different walks in life, and since then I have seen but little of him.

Bishop O'Donnell conferred upon him the sacrament of Confirmation; and soon after he made his first Communion.

The Catholic religion (he says) preaches mysteries and speaks of things that no human eye has ever seen, but teaches them to be realities. It leads a man to believe in those things more promptly than even the things that his eyes behold or his hands grasp. For instance, who has ever seen Christ in the Blessed Eucharist? Yet every Catholic child is taught, from the first day that reason beams upon him, that his God, his Lord, his Creator, his Redeemer, his Judge, is present, waiting in the Blessed Sacrament until that child is old enough to come to his first Communion and receive Him. What eye has ever seen the Holy Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity? But every Catholic knows and believes that the Holy Spirit of God is in His Church, that He lives with the Church, that He keeps that Church from ever telling a lie to the people, that He keeps that Church in holiness as well as in all truth, and that when the Bishop's hands are imposed upon the

[1] He himself usually made an act of faith in the Real Presence, to the effect that he believed more firmly than if his eyes witnessed it; for his eyes might deceive him, but God's written words never. Regarding the passage, 'This is my body; this is my blood,' he felt that until some other could be shown saying, 'This is by no means my body,' the declaration was conclusive.

[2] In St. Saviour's, Dublin, August 4, 1877.

head of the young child in Confirmation, that child receives the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost—wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and the fear of the Lord. Thus it is that not merely in the higher truths, regarding the unity and eternity of God, but even in those practical truths that come home to us and bring the Lord God to our very doors, the Catholic Church teaches the unseen and creates in man the faculty of realising it.[1]

From what his cousin and he himself says, it is clear that a sound spirit of piety underlay the exterior of the exuberant boy. He said when speaking of a sainted man who preserved his piety from early youth that in him 'sanctity was a development and not a change.'[2] On further search we find, on the authority of his own casual admission, that the cap of a schoolboy covered the head of a contemplatist.

Since I came to the age of reason, and learned my Catechism, and mastered the idea that was taught me of how God in heaven planned and designed the redemption of mankind, the greatest puzzle in my life has been—a thing that I could never understand—how anyone believing what I have said could refuse their veneration, their honour, and their love to the Blessed Virgin, Mother of Jesus Christ; for it seems to me nothing is more natural to the heart of man than to be grateful, and that, in proportion to the gift which is received we find our hearts springing with gratitude within us, and a strong craving to find out how best we can express our acknowledgments.

He then went on to cite from the Scriptures various holy women who proved themselves benefactors of mankind, and asked, 'What did any of them do for us in comparison to what Mary did?'[3] Indeed he was very much of opinion with Wordsworth, that

She was our tainted nature's solitary boast.

Alluding to early days, he says that she was always

[1] 'Catholicity as Revealed in the Character of the Irish People,' St. Gabriel's Church, New York, 1871.

[2] On the Festival of All Saints.

[3] 'Good Works with Faith Necessary to Salvation,' New York, May 2, 1872.

addressed 'not under the title of "Our Lady" or of the Blessed Virgin, but by the still more endearing name of *Muire Mathair*, "Mary Mother."'

Galwegians have been always prone to supernatural terrors. Fr. Burke, some months before his death, was interested to read in the public press the depositions of persons who believed they had seen at Galway Gaol the ghost of a man recently executed. It might be supposed that a youth so fond of practical jokes would have availed himself of so ready a field wherein to play upon the fears of others. While so far advanced as to be studying the dead languages, he continued alive to a dread of ghosts. His lecture on Faith, when showing the national faculty of realising the unseen, mentioned instances of the abuse of it, and stated that the Irish child, as soon as he arrives at the age of reason, at once displays that faculty.

> When he comes out of the back door and looks into the field, he imagines he sees a fairy in every bush. If he sees a butterfly upon a stalk, it is a *Leprechaun*. I remember, when a boy growing up, studying Latin, having made up my mind even then to be a priest, there was a certain old archway in Bowling Green, Galway, to which a tradition attached. It was near the place where Lynch, the Mayor, hanged his son, hundreds of years ago, and near the Protestant churchyard. Grown as I was, learning Latin, knowing everything about the Catechism,[1] and having made up my mind to be a priest, I was never able to pass under that arch after nightfall without running for dear life.[2]

All this made so deep an impression on him that when speaking in St. Gabriel's Church, New York, he recurred to it, adding—

[1] One of the passages in the said Catechism is, 'The dead arose and appeared to many.' Fr. Burke in his sermons often made effective reference to this appalling spectacle. Thus on Good Friday, 1882: 'Graves around the city opened, and the dead arose in all their terrors and stalked silently through the city, confronting the living and frightening them almost to death.' St. Patrick's, New York, March 17, 1872.

[2] 'The Christian Religion as Reflected in the National Character of the Irish Race and People,' New York, June 6, 1872.

That legend was the very torment of my young days. Not only when going to school, but in running errands for my mother, I had to pass through the blind archway very often. I always came up to it crying out, 'Hail, Mary!' and calling upon all the saints to stand by me; but with all my faith, there was at last nothing for it but flight.

'The faculty of realising the unseen' continued with him to the end. In 1865 extraordinary emotions filled him on believing that he saw, during his celebration of High Mass, the eyes of the Madonna of Vicovaro move. The incident, described by a Dominican, will be found in its proper place.

Alms had long been dispensed by a humane merchant, named Lynch. Nicholas often studied his pensioners as they thronged forward for relief, and in social hours long after has reproduced the scene, which, however, owed all its success to his face and ventriloquism. Among Lynch's pensioners was an old widow named Lacy. Cotheen, her son, was a half-fool given to drink. One day he came blubbering to say she had died, and Lynch gave him money to bury her. But the familiar wheeze of the old crone, some days after, as she came behind the high stool on which Lynch sat, scared him not a little; and when Cotheen again called, he upbraided him with his deceit. 'Pardon me this once,' said Cotheen; 'give me *7s. 6d.*, and I promise your honour that, living or dead, I will bury her on Friday.'

Kohl describes the quaint city of Galway as of Spanish architecture, with wide gateways, broad stairs, and all the fantastic ornaments calculated to carry the imagination back to Granada and Valentia, while its monks, corded friars, churches, and convents complete the resemblance.[1]

[1] Besides the Dominican, Franciscan, and Augustinian friars now in Galway, it once possessed Capuchins and Carmelites; but in troubled times they were banished and have never been restored. The habit of the Dominicans is black over white, and that of the Carmelites white over black. Fr. Burke, after he had become famous, was one day being photographed in his habit, when he came out in the negative with the white spots dark and the dark spots white. 'This

From the accounts given of Wat Burke, his acts and tastes would almost remind one of the vivacity of Andalusia. Before the sixteenth century seamen and traders from Asturias and Navarre often formed alliances with Galway girls; and who knows but that Spanish blood may have coursed through the veins of Angy and Wat Burke? Those who have visited Spain cannot fail to have been struck by the same red cloak, which makes the Galway peasant so picturesque an object. Fr. Tom, apparently moved by the spirit of Galway traditions, has danced for his mother the Spanish *cachuca*, accompanied by a grace and agility worthy of Fanny Elssler—performances which the matter-of-fact mother failed to view with unmixed satisfaction.

His personal appearance was not at first in his favour (writes Mr. E. O'Flaherty, who knew him in Galway at this time). His figure was without dignity, slender and ill-proportioned, the forehead unusually low and the expression in repose dark and melancholy, like most of the Spanish people of Galway; but see him in the pulpit, when in the white robes of his order he held up the cross to the enthralled multitude, and the figure seemed to grow and swell into grandeur. At such a moment he might have walked from the canvas of Murillo.[1]

He often related anecdotes of himself, but, like the saints, never aught that would tend to his commendation; indeed rather the reverse, as the reader has already seen. An able serial edited by some Jesuit Fathers describes Nicholas Burke as

a merry mischievous child, often incurring well-deserved chastisement from his good pious mother, who was not unmindful of the Wise Man's advice respecting the education of children. On one memorable occasion, which in after-life he loved to talk of, a Franciscan friar came to his mother's house to complain of one of the boy's tricks. The misdoing was regarded as so serious, especially as it had excited the good friar's wrath, that poor Master Nick had

is a wonderful studio of yours,' he said. 'I entered it a Dominican, and I have come out a Carmelite.'

[1] By a droll coincidence the name of the proprietor of the Galway newspaper is Ferdinand.

to take off his shirt, and the whip was applied with such vigour that he was soon 'clothed in rags of his own skin.' [1]

This latter phrase is obviously an embellishment. It is one of the stories which Fr. Burke in hours of relaxation would tell to amuse his fellows and to humble himself. Possibly he may have unconsciously enlarged, just as a man on revisiting haunts of childhood is amazed to find them so much smaller than what the early impression retained. Describing to the Parochus of Galway a kindred incident, he said that the beating was inflicted for walking upon and crushing the pipes of the church organ.

On a previous page it was mentioned that Mrs. Burke, before applying her cane, recited a particular prayer, and it is perhaps venial to recur to it, at least once, in writing the life of a man who himself in after-life continually harped upon it. This collect—better known as 'Prevent, O Lord'—entered into some prayers which Dominicans repeat before Mass. Fr. Burke said, at Tallaght, with his usual humour, that he never heard it recited without feeling a cold thrill between his shoulders. Mrs. Burke, as the Jesuit Father correctly states, would kneel down and command Nicholas to repeat slowly after her the words of this collect.

Dark indeed would seem to have been the outlook for the puny child, but his innate humour served to brighten such surroundings. He could even smile through his tears like a sunbeam in showers; and while Mrs. Burke sonorously

[1] Some persons, not relatives of Fr. Burke, vainly urged us to ignore these incidents; and it is satisfactory to find the Jesuits, who have a special regard for his memory, taking the course that we ventured to adopt :—

'After his own religious brethren,' they write, 'least of all can the sons of St. Ignatius forget him. The personal friend of many of them and the devoted admirer of their founder, never did he employ his wonderful powers of oratory to greater effect, never did his rich vein of original thought shine with greater brilliancy, never did he hold spell-bound his audience with greater skill and success than in the panegyric which he preached on the founder of the Society of Jesus. We mention it now as an additional reason why we should be ungrateful indeed were we to forget its author.'—*The Month*, September 1883.

repeated 'Prevent, O Lord, we beseech thee, all our actions,' he would pray in another sense, 'Prevent, O Lord;' but, as he often told his brother priests, 'it never *did* prevent,' and the lash continued to fall.

How the boy at last came to regard those beatings passively was doubtless by allowing his powerfully imaginative mind to picture the greater sufferings of Him whose name was a household word. The various stages of His Passion as described in the 'Meditations of the Rosary' had been driven into the child's mind by Margaret Burke at all hours and at all places. The beads never left her fingers, and the unction with which she would recite '*the number of stripes they gave Him being upwards of* 5,000, *as revealed to St. Bridget*,' flowed into the ear of that gifted boy, whose intelligence was such that with one glance at his tasks he bore off every premium. The fertility of his mind and the exhaustive completeness with which it realised that dread scene is shown in many of his sermons. One on 'The Resurrection' remarks that after the stripes it is only surprising the Saviour survived three hours on the Cross. His discourses on St. Dominic lay stress on the advantage of personal flagellation.

As the fact has obtained historic record that the youth received frequent corporal punishment, it is right to guard against unfriendly inference by telling the arch-offence which earned it; and therefore we transpose from a more remote part of our book some notes on Fr. Burke's visit in 1875 to the house of his aged mother in Galway.

He was in high spirits, and entertained with pleasant performances the old friends who had been asked to meet him.

'I hope these mimicries don't annoy you, ma'am,' Mrs. Burke said, addressing a guest. 'If there was one thing more than another that I chastised Nicholas for when a child, it was his habit of mimicking people. They used to call at my house to complain of him, and I tried to beat it out of him in vain.'

Mrs. Burke was the only person in the room who did not laugh. What pranks he played that evening will be found recorded at the proper time. The guest adds that Mrs. Burke's wrinkled hand was observed to wander instinctively towards her stick, whereupon Fr. Tom, thinking of the past, rubbed his shoulder, and sang forth with his grand baritone—

Oh, thou hast been the cause of this anguish, my mother.[1]

It must not be supposed that the stories which he used to tell of his mother's severity were allowed by him to impair the more tender impressions retained of her maternal character. At St. Gabriel's, New York, he asked—

Do we not know what class of woman was the mother that reared us at her knee? Oh! are we not familiar with that beautiful image that rises before us of the woman with the silver hair and the sweet voice—the woman with the old Spanish beads in her hand, the woman that taught us when we were yet unable to appreciate it the sweet tale of the love of Jesus Christ for Mary His mother and the love of Mary for her Child?

Flogging was the fashion of the day, and Mrs. Burke must not be severely judged. From the Scriptures to Locke, authorities crowd to justify it. That great philosopher notices with praise 'a mother who flogged her child eight times without subduing it; for had she stopped at the seventh castigation her infant might have been spoiled.' Margaret MacDonough, saint as she was, had herself been ruled with iron nerve in youth. She often told her daughters how she had been compelled not only to take care of, but to sleep with,

[1] He told the Ursulines that his mother to the last seemed quite to forget that he had ceased to be a child. Whenever he went to visit her in Galway she would go on to lecture him in the old way. She would ask him, as he knelt down to receive her blessing, if he were a good boy. Fr. Burke said to a member of the author's family, when about to visit Galway in 1875, 'Call upon my mother and get her blessing. She is really a saint, and I regard it as of great value.' This person waited upon Mrs. Burke, and when taking leave the old lady pressed her beads on the visitor's head, while she fervently invoked a benediction.

some maniac female relation to whom her parents humanely gave shelter. How children when adults will follow in the walk made for them in childhood is shown in the after-life of Margaret Burke. She was so compassionate to suffering humanity, no matter in what form it presented itself, that, a lady who had seen better days becoming insane, Mrs. Burke took her to live with them. The lady's delusion was that all the priests of Galway had entered into a conspiracy to hunt her down, and the frequent visits of Mrs. Burke's clerical friends did not tend to allay it. Her daughters—made unhappy by domestication with a daft woman—regarded it as a real relief when one day she left the house never again to return. Mrs. Burke, on the other hand, was filled by painful anxiety lest the demented creature in her flight should come to an untimely end.

Meanwhile Nicholas Burke held on his course just as his bright instincts led him, but often compelled to pay the penalty. His career in youth—aglow with excitement and often marked by crosses—was like that of the place which boasts the honour of his birth. When Galway was young, suffering laid its heavy hand upon the city of St. Nicholas. In 1568, and long after, Mass was sternly prohibited. An Italian traveller in that year attended Mass in a private house in Galway. He saw at one view the Blessed Sacrament raised by the priest, boats passing up and down the river, a ship entering the port in full sail, a salmon killed with a spear, and hunters and hounds pursuing a deer. 'Though I have travelled Europe,' adds the Italian, 'I have never before witnessed a sight which combined so much variety and beauty.'[1]

Interwoven with the sufferings of the heroic men who went before, was a certain amount of wild adventure which invested with some romance the *rôle* of a friar. They bore

[1] Hardiman's *History of Galway*, p. 85. The old blood of Galway had a narrow escape of being completely wiped out. Hardiman tells us that the plantation of the town by a colony from Liverpool and Gloucester was strongly urged by Cromwell.

historic names, too, which carried prestige in Galway. 'Where is the nation that was ever so loved?' exclaimed Fr. Burke, when lecturing on 'The Irish People in Relation to Catholicity,' and as usual throwing in a grotesque phrase where least expected:—

In the three hundred years of persecution, take the 'Bhrèathair,' the old Irish friar, the Dominicans, and Franciscans, who were of the first families of the land—the O'Neills, the Maguires, the McDonnels, the McDermotts; down in Galway, the Frenches, the Lynches, the Blakes, and the Burkes. These fair youths used to be actually smuggled out by night, and sent off the coast of Ireland to Rome, to France, and to Spain, to study. Enjoying all the delicious climates of those lovely countries, surrounded by honour, leading easy lives, filling the time with the study and intellectual pleasures of the priesthood, still every man felt uneasy. To use the old familiar phrase, 'they were like a hen on a hot griddle' as long as they were away from Ireland, although they knew that in Ireland they were liable to be thrown into prison, or be subjected to death.

As he thought of the past his eye wandered in the direction of the West Chapel—then ministered by the representatives of these men. He regarded with loving interest Fr. Folan, the most vigorous vocalist in Galway, and when that good friar sang, 'Oh! come to the west,' the seeming significance of the invitation was wholly accidental.

Mrs. Burke, like most pious people, had her cross, and it passed to her son as a legacy. An allusion to it occurs in some remarks on the relief which confession brings:—

If you find a true friend that can keep a secret, the next thing is, what can he do for you? If you tell him your secret can he lead you out of the difficulty? Can he enable you to throw off the burden and think no more about it? How many times do we meet a friend in whose honour we can trust, yet a fool who has not capacity to help us beyond saying '*Ah.*' I knew an old man once who looked very wise. I had something that was fretting me very much, so I said, 'I want you to show me the way out of this difficulty.' The answer I got was, 'Oh! blood alive!' I remember when a little boy my mother had some family trouble. She went to a confidential friend

to get advice and unbosom her care. She told the story faithfully, with all the circumstances about what 'she said' and 'he said,' but all the counsel she could get as she rocked herself to and fro was, 'Oh, wirra, wirra!' Now if our friends can do nothing more for us than to open their eyes and say 'Lord help you,' and 'Oh, wirra, wirra!' it is not worth while to go to the trouble of telling our secrets, or of asking their advice. But God has provided in the Church a mighty vent for this natural craving of man.

Mark how beautifully the confessional harmonises with all this. The Catholic who has something which is a source of mental anxiety, and the keeping of which is breaking his heart, knows that in the first priest he meets he has a friend whom God has provided for him, and in whom he can place implicit faith.[1]

Fr. Burke, in his discourse on Cardinal Cullen, said: 'Next to the Grace of God the highest blessing that man can receive is education. St. Thomas proves ignorance to be the root of all sin.' He urged 'the cultivation and development in a right direction of the intelligence, the heart, and the will;' adding, 'Truth, natural and supernatural, is the virtue of the intellect, beauty the object of the affections, and a just estimate of the truly beautiful, their virtue; charity in its widest sense the guide and virtue of the will.'

Dr. O'Toole's system of education, while developing the higher graces, fostered in his pupils a love of culture. Declamation being part of his programme, they were required to master some of the most memorable parts of Shakspeare, with what results we shall see.

[1] Lecture on 'The Harmony of Catholic Worship,' Boston, U.S., September 25, 1872.

CHAPTER II.

THEATRICALS AND THEOLOGY—GALWAY DAYS CONTINUED.

THE curtain rises to disclose a new act in the small domestic drama of this history. Nicholas Burke was attracted by the Temple of Thespis, and for weeks was stage-struck. But lest ascetics should start, it is well to tell at once that the theatricals which attracted him were purely amateur. One of the most promising of Dr. O'Toole's pupils—his friend Charles Dugan—had organised a small company which performed to crowded chairs in Flood's Lane. Miss Burke informs us that a friend of the family happened to visit her mother at this time, and astonished the good woman by saying that he had been kept spell-bound by the performance of her son. 'Depend upon it,' he said, 'that boy will make his mark yet.' 'Sir, that is not the sort of mark I'd like Nicholas to make,' was the reply of the Galway Tertiary.[1]

I think that it was while at Dr. O'Toole's seminary we organised these private theatricals (writes Mr. Dugan). Like all young beginners, we were ambitious, and would commence at nothing less than *Richard III.* I played the 'crook-backed tyrant;' and as our company was small, Burke had two or three parts assigned to him. When young he had somewhat nice delicate features, and was

[1] Mrs. Burke continued to the end to occupy that middle stage between the world and the cloister known as The Third Order. This institution, which dates from the thirteenth century, binds its members to avoid dances and theatres, to pray more frequently, to dress more soberly, to fast more strictly, and to practise works of mercy more systematically, than ordinary laics; and they made simple vows to observe the rule. These Tertiaries are styled by St. Francis Brothers and Sisters of Penance. This circumstance helps to account for the austerity of Mrs. Burke's character.

very slim in person. He therefore took the part of Lady Anne; and I distinctly remember how well he looked the character and acted it too. We also had a play, *Gisippus*, by Gerald Griffin, who just at this time had joined the Christian Brothers, and soon after died. An incident during the course of our histrionic career clings to my memory. Burke took the part of a personage, I forget what, whom I was to slay. He wore a green jerkin with plated buttons. I used a handsome dagger, blunted at the point, that we picked up somewhere. Acting our parts too well, and in the excitement of the action, I aimed the dagger under Burke's arm, but struck too closely to his side, so that the buttons and portion of his jerkin and of his inner vest were cut away—in fact the blade grazed his skin. He turned white and staggered to the side scenes. I was so horrified that I rushed after him, all the while the audience applauding tremendously, thinking that all this was part of the acting. I found poor Burke almost fainting, lying on a chair, his hand pressed to his side, two or three of the other performers around him bathing his temples. I thought that I had killed him. It was a mere scratch, however. His faintness was owing to fright; he had always some delicacy of the heart. But at all events I was nearly being the innocent cause of depriving Ireland of her future great Dominican.

Our theatre was the large loft on an empty store in Flood Street belonging to my father. The scenes were painted by Burke and myself. I think he alone did the side scenes. The drop represented the Killarney lakes, and in doing this with me he showed much taste for painting. In those days costumiers were not so plentiful or apt as they now are, and our pocket money was too limited to have recourse to any such aids. The dresses were therefore made up at home. Lady Anne's dress was formed from an old black velvet dress belonging to my sister. Burke got it trimmed with white fur. I think we cut up a valuable fur cloak of my mother's for this purpose. I can assure you that Burke in this attire looked the gentle Lady Anne to perfection.[1]

One of the performers was Mr. J. J. Brady, now civil engineer, Galway. While some of the minor actors had merely tin dirks, which bent harmlessly on the breast, he wielded a veritable sword, which had whilom flourished at the Battle of

[1] Letter of Charles Winston Dugan, Esq. [Adelaide House, Clonmel] to the Author, October 13, 1883.

Castlebar, when the royal troops fled in disorder. Thirty years after, Fr. Burke and Mr. Brady met at a banquet in Galway. One of Fr. Burke's first observations across the table was: 'John, do you remember the night that you nearly cut the hand off Jack Toole, when he neglected to let down the drop?' This is explained by the following reminiscence:—

Mr. Dugan was Duke of Gloster, afterwards Richard III., and a capital Richard he was. I was Richmond, and also King Henry VI.'s ghost, and, concealed in a white sheet, accused my friend Dugan (Gloster) 'of having *punched several holes* in my anointed body, &c.' . . . . And in a few moments I appeared as the victorious Richmond, on Bosworth Field; and, having despatched Gloster, I tried a like experiment on our scene-shifter, who, for some unaccountable reason, did not let down the drop-scene at the proper moment; but I, with one well-directed blow of my sword, cut the cord that held it. The rapidity of its descent must have charmed the audience, as the applause on the occasion was immense. . . . . .[1]

His tastes gradually became more dramatic. Indeed, he may be said to have breathed in birth and boyhood a Thespian atmosphere. His natal spot in Kirwan's Lane was within a door or two of the Galway theatre. Hardiman, who published his History in 1820, describes its scenery as then elegant. 'Barry, Mossop, Kemble, Cooke, Siddons, Walstein, and O'Neill visited these boards.' To this list may be added Edmund Kean, whom the present Dominican Prior of Galway remembers playing in Kirwan's Lane.[2]

A popular piece was O'Keefe's 'Wild Oats,' in which the career of a strolling player is invested with romantic interest.

[1] Letter of J. J. Brady, Esq., C.E., Galway, Nov. 5, 1883. There seems to have been more than one cast of the play.

[2] This lane, now a line of ruins, exhibits decided traces of the architecture peculiar to Spain, and until the first quarter of the present century was peopled by persons of good position. Its chimney-pieces, which still cling to the roofless, floorless walls, reveal in their blackened hearths stories of social nights long passed away, and record in imperishable lines the strong Catholic feeling of their original owners. One of special massiveness displays carvings of the crown of thorns, the sponge, pincers, and nails, surmounted by the letters 'IHS' and the date '1615.' On a ruined wall in Dead Man's Lane, Galway, is cut the motto, 'Vaniti of Vaniti and all is but Vaniti, 1624.'

'Once, when a dramatic company visited Galway,' said Fr. Burke, 'my mother took the precaution of locking me up.'[1]

Histrionic tastes were with him no passing fancy. Though as a priest the theatre was forbidden to him, he showed to the end dramatic passion and power. An English critic having gone to hear Fr. Burke preach, a few years before his death, noticed him in words which, for the curiosity of the thing, are pressed into this page :—

> The great Dominican's voice has a rare range, without break or deficiency in any part of the compass. In the portions of his speeches which are more easily delivered it is a mellow bass, heard without difficulty, though produced without effort, over the area of a large building. In the passages which are delivered with rising energy Father Burke's voice is a very fine, rich alto, with a slightly nasal *timbre*, such as is often observable in great tragedians. If G. V. Brooke had suffered the tonsure towards the latter part of his life and donned the black and white habit of the Dominicans he would have been very much such a man as Father Burke is; but Father Burke's bass is never sepulchral or artificial as Brooke's was apt to be.[2]

Had it not been for that Divine Grace which in Nicholas Burke became a development and not a change—had it not been for the watchful maternal eye—it is hard to say in what *rôle* his career might not have been cast.

The youth was free at least to read. From studying Shakspeare's plays, he was led to look into the chronicles on which those masterpieces were founded. The thrilling story of Macbeth and Duncan King of Scotland sent him to the history of that country. *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Julius Cæsar*, and *Coriolanus* sent him to Rome. Traces of this reading will be found in his lecture on 'The Supernatural Life of the Irish People.'

Other duties led Dr. O'Toole to relinquish schooling, to the great regret of his pupil, who thereupon was sent to the

[1] Fr. Burke to Miss Edith Moore.

[2] The criticism, which runs to a column, appeared in the *Liverpool Journal*.

academy of Mr. Michael Winter, in Galway.[1] 'Now is the winter of our discontent,' he muttered; but the sunshine which lit up his nature and surroundings would ever and anon gleam. Referring long after to his sojourn with Mr. Winter, 'he described it,' writes Mr. Dugan, 'as his period of hybernation, punning on the teacher's name, and at the same time slily hitting at the little work he did or was asked to do.' Mr. Dugan did not meet Burke again until the year 1873.

I was at that time in Birr, and as we had not met since we parted at Galway as youths on our different roads in life, I was of course most anxious to see him, now the famous Dominican. I drove to Roscrea, went to the sacristy of the church, and found that Burke was then engaged in the confessional. One of the attendant priests, however, volunteered to tell him that I was there. In a few minutes my old friend came in, and grasped me in his arms and wept. Twenty-five years before had we parted; he was then a slim awkward-looking lad, now he appeared before me as the majestic ecclesiastic in the flowing picturesque habit of his Order.

We talked together of old times, and during conversation some circumstances, as bearing on his future renown and career, were spoken of. Amongst others the following:—

He and I were in the habit of walking very frequently from Galway to Salthill and Blackrock. Here, upon this rocky shore, where the Atlantic waves are ever breaking, he used to put small shells and pebbles in his mouth and declaim to the sea in a loud voice. I was his audience, and my function seemed to be to tell him whether he spoke sufficiently loud and clear to distinguish his words over the sound of the waters. His gesticulations were very marked: now he seemed to be addressing the waves—now the rocks—swaying about his thin body and long arms. To a person at a distance he must have seemed a lunatic.[2]

[1] Miss Burke says that her brother went from Winter's school direct to Rome. Mr. Dugan's first impression was that he attended Winter's before O'Toole's. On pointing out the discrepancy, he has been good enough to make personal inquiry in Galway, and now endorses the statement of Miss Burke.

[2] This fondness for the seashore continued to the end. For many years before his death Fr. Burke was in the habit of bringing with him to Kingstown, Bray, or Sandymount, the gifted young Dominican preacher, Rev. J. P. Daly, and, while sitting on the rocks, discussing points of deep interest to both. The voice and

He sometimes failed to express himself with the fluency he wished, and by the means I have mentioned he sought to strengthen his chest and nerve, and to acquire a loud voice. On speaking about those times I said, 'Surely, Father Tom, you must then have had some foresight of your future career.' He replied, laughing, 'No, Charlie, I was only aping Demosthenes.' Then suddenly he said, 'There I used to speak to a sea of senseless water, but afterwards I had to speak to seas of human hearts. May God grant that they were not senseless also. Strange,' he continued; 'perhaps these waves on the shores of Galway came to me as messengers to my spirit from a far-off western shore'—an allusion to his mission in America.

I do not think that any one save myself is aware of these interesting facts. At his desire we studiously kept our sea-shore visits secret as possible.

Those rambles with the friend of his youth were full of glow. Twenty years after he adverts to both in words too precious to be cast aside.

"It is not, perhaps, the beauties of the land that we remember; it is not the green hillsides, crowned with the Irish oak, made so beautiful in their clothing of the Irish fern, that rise before our eyes, and excite the tenderest emotions of our souls; it was not the beauties of Avoca that captivated the poet when he sang—

> Yet it was not that Nature had shed o'er the scene
> Her purest of crystal and brightest of green;
> 'Twas not her soft magic of streamlet or hill,
> Oh! no—it was something more exquisite still.
>
> 'Twas that friends, the beloved of my bosom, were near,
> Who made every dear scene of enchantment more dear,
> And who felt how the best charms of Nature improve,
> When we see them reflected from looks that we love.

So, perhaps, it is not the material beauty of Ireland—the green hillside, or the pastoral beauty of glade or of valley; it is not,

manner of Fr. Daly in the pulpit so resembled Burke's that it was often hard to distinguish between them. But Burke was entirely free from the jealousy found in other professions, and paternally guided to maturity the rising talents of his friend. Often, when the latter was about to preach, Fr. Burke would enter his room and place before him various plans of sermons from which to choose; or sometimes to read for him, with the elocution of which he was master, his favourite poet, Alfred Tennyson.

perhaps, the running brook, the millpond, the green field, the moss-grown old abbey, around which we played in our youth—not so much these that command our love; but it is the holy, tender associations of all that we first learned to love and to venerate: the pure-minded, holy, loving mother, the wise and considerate father; the tender friend upon whom we leaned, and whose friendship was to us the earliest joy of our life: the venerable priest, whose smile we sought as we bowed our youthful heads for his blessing. These, and such as these, are the motives of our love for Ireland.[1]

But with his usually keen perception of the ludicrous he noticed the peculiarities of not a few friends. 'A lackadaisical Galwegian,' writes Mr. Molloy, 'had a habit on hearing any news, from an earthquake to the latest litter of kittens, of taking off his hat, slapping his forehead and exclaiming, "Oh, good hour!" If this departed worthy comported himself as drolly as Fr. Burke described him, a trip to see the sight would not have been amiss.'

Those who remember Lever's pictures of Galway life fifty years ago, and of the Baby Blakes and Louisa Bellews who led hearts captive in that region, will understand that a youth specially susceptible to the influences of music and poetry would have been more than human had he stood within it wholly unscathed. But, as he says in his discourse on Cardinal Barnabo, 'Young blood, with passions to be subdued, are frozen into an icicle of Christian purity by the touch of Divine grace.'

The lady who was the object of young Burke's boyish admiration (writes his early companion, Charles Winston Dugan) told me that from her remembrance of him he was a tall boy with large dark eyes and darker hair, fond of singing, and that he serenaded her with such lyrics as 'I saw from the beach,' &c. This lady was considerably above him in social position, so that most of his love-making was from a distance.[2]

'After his return from Italy and America, when he had

[1] Lecture at the Academy of Music, New York, May 22, 1872. Those familiar with Galway will recognise all the places thus rapidly noticed.

[2] Letter of Charles Wiston Dugan, Esq., Adelaide House, October 18, 1882.

become famous,' adds Mr. Dugan, 'they met at a friend's house, on which occasion he referred to the old days. He also mentioned that it was in that memorable dramatic affair of ours he made his *début* in public speaking.' The lady, who was the object of his boyish attention, was his senior. We believe that at the time of the conversation chronicled by Mr. Dugan she was a grandmother, so that ascetics must not pooh-pooh the priest for alluding historically to their early acquaintance.

Had not Nicholas been, as his friends describe him, 'a retiring boy,' his marked attainments and devotion would probably have won the heart and fortune of some lady—and thus a great light would have been lost to the Church! Men given to 'gosther' said that, had he gone on and conquered, he would probably have become M.P. for his native city, and, like two other Catholic youths who sat for it, he might be now the Right Hon. Lord Chief Justice Burke, draped in ermined robes, and in the running for the woolsack.

The youth soon realised with a start the anomalous character of his position—the instrument of music dropped from his hand; he recalled the whisperings of his vocation, but without attempting to subdue the general exuberance of his animal spirits. He gave his voice to the Choir—his heart to the Church.

Five years before his death he quoted the following lines in reference to a great priest whose eulogy he preached; and the striking thought thus expressed is likely to have been previously applied by that vigorous manly mind to his own case. 'He must be the Church's champion and defender, her true knight, her faithful and ever-loving spouse,' said Fr. Burke. 'The Church of God, girding him with her cincture, said:

> "My knight, my love, my knight of heaven,
> O thou, my love, whose love is one with mine,
> I, maiden, round thee, maiden, bind my belt.
> Go forth, for thou shalt see what I have seen,

And break thro' all, till one will crown thee king
Far in the spiritual city : " and as she spake
She sent the deathless passion in her eyes
Thro' him, and made him hers, and laid her mind
on him.

'To be admitted to these mystic espousals of holy love, devotion, and care of the Church of God,' added Fr. Burke, 'is the very highest and most honourable form of Divine grace.'

It will be seen that throughout his after-life he had but one earthly love—the Church. Every new temple that rose he regarded as an additional gem tending to the increased beauty of his bride. Beautiful he found her, 'in the beauty of faith, hope, and love,' to use his own touching words.

The local castle-building which assigned to him a judicial destiny may have been promoted by the fact that he seemed to show legal leanings. Something of this is remembered by Mr. Dugan.

As was wont with most of the young people at Galway (he writes), I used to frequent the Assize Court, and was frequently accompanied by Nicholas Burke. Monahan (afterwards Chief Justice), Gerald Fitzgibbon, Mathew Baker, James Blake, Keating (afterwards Judge), and Charles O'Malley, were the leaders at that time of the Connaught circuit. Many of the celebrated men of the other circuits frequently came down special. I remember that we went to hear Keogh. When I last saw Fr. Burke, some years before his death, I learned from him that he had come to know in private this remarkable judge. Amongst other judges attending Galway Assizes were Crampton, Torrens, Lefroy, Pennefather, and Perrin.

I think it is Johnson who observes that the early years of distinguished men on minute inquiry furnish proof of the existence of that for which they are celebrated in after-life. Fr. Burke bears no exception to this. He was fond of oratory and of listening to great orators; and in his mission as a preacher he remembered the dicta of Cicero and Quintilian, 'The duties of an orator are to instruct, to prove, and to please.[1]

The Court House at Galway, besides its criminal business,

[1] Letter of C. W. Dugan, Esq., Clonmel, November 7, 1883.

was a famous arena for cases of breach of promise of marriage. The humour shown in cross-examination, and the acumen by which hearts and minds were turned inside out, tickled Burke's sense of the ludicrous and fed his knowledge of men. If the plausible platitudes of some counsel made him smile, the dignity and impartial bearing of the judges impressed him with respect for the seat of Justice.[1]

The succeeding page will find him in more thoughtful mood, and, like Hamlet, philosophising in churchyard and ivy-mantled ruins. In order to perform these pilgrimages he had, as he tells us, to travel fields and vales, where the beautiful melody of his native country floated from the milkmaid's song as she tripped homeward with her pail. He bade 'God speed' to the woman who, at her spinning, carolled some touching ditty with which his own nurse had soothed him to rest. He wept with the mother who sent forth the *keene* over her daughter's grave. He halted before the forge where the blacksmith sang to the ring of his own anvil. He joyously recognised the shrines wherein the national music had been preserved; and when afterwards aught arose to re-awaken these emotions, his whole soul would be stirred as fond memories of the past crowded to his mind. Twelve years before his death he addressed an American audience in words which throw light upon his life and thoughts:—

Is there anything in this world that so acts upon our memory as the sound of the old, familiar song, that we may not have heard for years? We heard it, perhaps, in some lonely glen, in dear old Ireland. We have been familiar from our youth with the sound of that ancient melody, as the man sang it following his horses and plough, as the old woman murmured it whilst she rocked the child; as the milkmaid chanted it as she milked the cows in the evening; it is one of the traditions of our young hearts and of our young senses. Then, when we leave the Green Land, and go out amongst strange people, we hear strange words and strange music. The songs

[1] O'Connell will be remembered in the great case Routledge *v.* Routledge, heard at Galway. T. B. Smith (who, as Attorney-General, afterwards prosecuted him) acted as his junior, and deferentially consulted with him on every point.

of our native land for a moment are forgotten, until upon a day, perhaps, as we are passing, that air, or old song, is sung again. Oh, in an instant, that magic power in the sound of the old familiar notes throngs the halls of the memory with the dead. They rise out of their graves, the friends of our youth, the parents, and the aged ones, whom we loved and revered. Our first love rises out of her grave, in all the freshness of her beauty. So they fill the halls of the memory, the ones we may have loved in the past, with the friends whom we never expected to think of again.

Well does the poet describe it when he says :—

'When through life unblest we rove,
Losing all that made life dear,
Should some notes we used to love
In days of boyhood meet our ear,
Oh! how welcome breathes the strain,
Wak'ning thoughts that long have slept—
Kindling former smiles again,
In faded eyes that long have wept.'

No words of mine can exaggerate the power that music sheds over the soul of man.

It was about this time that Dr. Davies attended Nicholas Burke in a severe attack of typhoid fever. A similar visitation was the turning-point in St. Augustine's life, and it has been often whispered that Nicholas had followed the early courses of that great Father until this historic illness came to bind him to God. But we know from the following admission that he was free from taint. The good physician who brought him through the crisis of his fever writes: 'Many a time the poor fellow said to me that I had a great deal to answer for in not letting him, as he said, "go when he was young and innocent."'[1]

This great cross was his first vision of Predestination. For days his life lay in the balance. Not strictly belonging to this world or the next, he seemed to float on the confines between both, surveying the vanities of the one and contemplating the glories of the other. At last the crisis came, and he rose as if by a miracle. In one of his sermons he

[1] Letter of E. Davies, Esq., M.D., J.P., Athenry, October 23, 1883.

refers touchingly to this fever and its results, and again in almost the same words when describing the sickness of St. Ignatius.

The enforced rest which followed threw him back upon himself, and to while away the hours of convalescence he began to read the Lives of the Saints. With his grand, simple faith he read of the great actions of the famous servants of God, and as everything heroic touched a fibre in his heart, he felt himself transported with strong desires to emulate the greatest of these saints. The utter hollowness and vanity of the world and of earthly things came home to his mind with wonderful clearness, and returning to his Lives of the Saints he said to himself: 'These men were of the same frame as I; why should I not do what they have done?'

Never was Fr. Burke more effective than when, preaching of others, he gave his own experiences. The flame of his love for Christ was fanned by his pious mother, who for many nights bent anxiously over the idol of her dream. He now returned to the little world around him, impressed by the glimpse that had been unveiled. The youth had now finally determined, though without openly avowing his resolve, to consecrate that life which had been so providentially spared to the service of Almighty God.

His mother meanwhile took good care that the great influence, to which allusion has already been made, should continue regularly to assert its sway.

Now, the only way to create that interior essence of virtue (he said in words addressed to an American audience) is to establish firmly in the soul and in the mind of man the idea of this responsibility to God for every thought as well as for every action and word of his life—to bring him face to face with Christ—to make him not only know, but feel that He whom he serves looks with a penetrating gaze into the very inner chambers of his soul. How does the Church do this? By bringing that young man to confession; by putting him face to face with Christ, scrutinising and examining his thoughts, his words, and actions; by making him search, by the light of memory, every craving of his soul and of his imagination.

A youth who was constantly brought by his mother to 'chapel' — as the house of prayer, in deference to a habit contracted in penal days, was then styled—could not be without hearing plenty of sermons. Dr. Kirwan, P.P. of Oughterard, delivered discourses of such dramatic power that, if reported in days when stenography was not cultivated in Connaught, would have raised his fame to the highest rank; but his sweetness was too long wasted on the desert air. We at first suspected, and on inquiry have discovered, that the oratory of the Oughterard priest had no small effect in forming the tastes and aspirations of young Burke. Daniel Owen Madden, hearing of this priest's power, attended with other Protestants a chapel where he preached. In 'Revelations of Ireland' he prints a large sample of what he heard; and in reference to a story which Kirwan introduced, adds that 'a dramatic anecdote always moves a congregation, especially when told, as in this instance, with pathos of manner and with all the variety of gesture and tone requisite for oratorical effect.'

This was the sort of stimulus to head and heart of which the boy Burke drank until his ambition to go and do likewise became fired. Kirwan constantly preached in Galway in the strain thus described. He had been previously charmed with the elocutionary promise displayed by young Burke at Dr. O'Toole's annual Academus. Evening after evening in church he is said to have recognised a glistening eye rivetted upon him; and, just as Garrick would act to some special face, may not Kirwan too have been led by high hopes to soar? Those who care to see a fine specimen of Kirwan's style will find it in 'Revelations of Ireland,' 1st ed., pp. 57–9.

All familiar with Burke's pulpit oratory will, on a comparison, recognise the model which in after-life perhaps unconsciously influenced him. No man was more fond of introducing an anecdotal episode, and a pin might be heard to drop when

once he entered upon it. This and much more we had written when confirmation of our idea was furnished by Burke's school-fellows, who say that he loved to mimic for their amusement Kirwan in the act of electrifying a congregation.

If Burke's talents as a preacher received fostering stimulus from the example of Kirwan, his humour derived an impetus from association with Fr. Mat. Joyce. Between the latter and Fr. Peter Daly a perpetual fusillade went on. The priests of Galway had assembled for the purpose of nominating a Bishop, when Fr. Daly—an aspirant to the mitre—entering the room and accosting Fr. Joyce, brusquely said : 'I suppose we shall soon congratulate you upon being the *Right* Reverend?' 'I only know that you will be *Left* Reverend,' was the reply. A volume might be filled with the jokes of Joyce that we gathered at Galway.

Of the subsequent short careers of Drs. Kirwan and O'Toole, a word remains to be said. Originally distinguished in promoting 'the propagation of the Faith,' Dr. O'Toole was eventually reproved for aiding to undermine it. This startling statement demands explanation. He became Professor in, and at last Vice-President of the Queen's College, Galway, and, although some of the most prominent bishops declared themselves strong supporters of that system of education, a majority finally outvoted them. Pius IX. pronounced against the scheme, though Gregory XVI. had in 1841 sanctioned it with safeguards ; and in the end Ireland rang with 'O'Connell's denunciation of the Godless colleges.' It is remarkable that Kirwan became the first President of the Queen's College, Galway, and both he and Dr. O'Toole were finally visited by reproof from Rome. Kirwan resigned ; O'Toole hesitated ; his position was made still warmer by the well-directed broadsides of Canons and the comments of Catholic journalists. O'Toole at last capitulated. He left Ireland and found at Abingdon, of which he became the priest, shelter and a grave. Kirwan in private had been

always a great social favourite ; he was eminently ornamental, and long before it was supposed that he would ever become 'a Massillon,' Miss Martin, of Ballinahinch, introduced his fine character in a novel. His descent to the tomb was slow and tortuous. This great orator became paralysed in tongue and brain. With the sparkle of his once lustrous eyes quenched, and gazing around with vacant stare, the ex-President of the Queen's College presented a sad spectacle of fallen greatness ; but for some time he moved about mechanically in the attempted discharge of routine. At last the happy rescue came.

Mrs. Burke's confessor was Father Austin MacDermott, O.S.A., whom all the family loved so much that for more than twenty years he dined twice a week in their house.

Fr. Burke often amused his friends the Jesuit Fathers with accounts of the great Augustinian of Galway. The ordinary confessor of Nicholas was Fr. Cummins, but once when the boy performed some trick specially repellent to the staid nature of his mother—

I was brought before Fr. MacDermott (he said) sitting sternly in the tribunal. He wore large spectacles like a pair of gig-lamps, and he took such quantities of snuff that the penitent, as his head peered through the hole of the confessional, would be frequently sneezing, accompanied by exclamations of 'God bless us!'[1] Fr. MacDermott looked so awful behind the big spectacles, furnished with this accumulated power to read my soul, steeped in the guilt of many mimickries, especially of himself, that I well remember when my mother brought me by the lug to his box I took care to provide space behind for retreat in case my judge should suddenly rise to smite.

With reminiscences like these Fr. Burke, in intervals of rest in a life of toil, amused the genial sons of Loyola. It must be added, however, that Fr. MacDermott's 'bark was worse than his bite,' and Nicholas Burke at last came to love

[1] From the time of Thucydides, sneezing has been regarded as a symptom of the Plague. In Italy the custom still exists of saying 'Salute,' and in Milan, as in Ireland, 'God bless us,' when a sneeze occurs.

him well. He was rather a remarkable man, and will be remembered by readers of the 'Life of Bishop Doyle' as the fellow-student of 'J. K. L.' at Coimbra, where, on the outbreak of the Peninsular War, both threw aside for a time their collegiate gowns and followed the column of Sir Arthur Wellesley.

Fr. MacDermott was under fire at Caldas and Roleia, slept almost under the same tent as Wellington, held the honorary rank of captain, gave spiritual assistance to the dying, had a narrow escape at Vimiera, helped to rout the French headed by Junot in person, got the ague twice after the Convention of Cintra—due to the hardships of field and bivouac—returned to Ireland, applied for the Peninsular medal, became Provincial of the Augustinians and the confessor of Margaret Burke.[1]

His intimacy with the family was partly due to the proximity of the Augustinian Convent to Wat Burke's house in Cross Street. The modest 'West Chapel of the Dominicans' stood at the extreme outskirt of Galway, and how Nicholas became specially familiar with it in boyhood will presently appear.

For years (writes Fr. Towers, O.P.) the West Convent of Galway, as the Dominican house there is popularly called, was favoured by a succession of gifted fathers, who announced the Gospel with eloquence and power. Dr. French,[2] the last Warden of Galway, afterwards Bishop of Kilfenora, his brother Fr. Charles, Dr. Winter and others, are still remembered as great preachers by the old inhabitants. Perhaps this local fame may have insensibly influenced the future preacher.

The contiguity of the West Chapel to the Claddagh is stated by Hardiman as not the least of the causes which attach that primitive race to their local situation. The

[1] Several of his letters addressed to the present writer, detailing his early adventures, will be found in the *Life of Bishop Doyle*.

[2] In 1849 a friend of the writer's, when dining with Fr. Nagle, P.P., Gort, sat between two ecclesiastics—one the son of a parson, the other the son of a lapsed priest. The first was Dr. French; the second was Dr. Kirwan, Protestant Dean of Limerick, and son of the Rev. Walter Blake Kirwan, who conformed in 1787.

manners, habits, and character of its people are as distinct from the inhabitants of the adjoining town of Galway, as though they were of another country, and Nicholas, who, as Fr. Russell, O.P., states, 'always loved to study everything quaint or queer,' was irresistibly attracted towards the strange colony. In the election on St. John's eve of the King, Mayor, and Corporation of the Claddagh, with its ringing mirth and primitive customs, Nicholas Burke often participated.

In 1872 he was freely interviewed by the American reporters. His *bonhomie* and candour made him communicative.

He was the most restless of all scholars, as fond of play as he was devoted to his books. Men who grew up with him from boyhood relate the innocent jokes which he daily concocted to the confusion of the fishermen of the Claddagh, who loved him as much as they feared his schemes.[1]

His fondness for the sea and association with fishermen reminded me of St. John (writes Dr. Davies). I remember that he spent most of his leisure hours among the fishermen of the Claddagh, and I often heard him ascribe the largeness of his ears to his mother having so frequently pulled them as punishment for his going so often to the Claddagh against her wishes. He was a very arch boy, but never vicious, as wild boys often are. In his wonderful powers of mimicry, here too he was peculiar—always true to the life, not unkindly sarcastic or cynical.[2]

It has been said that people born with silver spoons in their mouths do not always make a stir in the world; and the case of Nicholas Burke somehow recalls the idea.

Another phase of impulse now swept across his mind, to the increased anxiety of his watchful mother; but it was an impulse reconcilable with sound spiritual tendencies. Born in the era of Catholic Emancipation, he shared all the enthusiasm of O'Connell's triumph. The 'Repeal excitement was now at white heat.'

Speeches were made on every side (writes Mr. Sherlock); the air was thick with oratory; the papers were crammed with the utterances

[1] *Redpath's Weekly*, New York, No. 346.

[2] Letter to the author from E. N. Davies, Esq., M.D., J.P., Athenry.

of prominent politicians, and among them were some of the most stirring speakers that ever sought to rouse the souls of their fellow-men. Young Burke's spirit moved before a new impulse. He became the orator of his schoolmates.

It was in such times that he found his power to move men's souls by language afterwards to be turned to high purpose in the pulpits of the Old World and the New.

Blessed by the patriot prelate of the West, some of O'Connell's first monster meetings were held in Connaught. A picture of that at Clifton hangs before us as we write, with portraits of Smith O'Brien, Davis, and the Bishops of Meath and Ardagh; while O'Connell himself stands in the centre, swaying the multitude with his grandly mellifluous brogue which Fr. Burke, natural orator as he was, did not disdain afterwards to borrow. In 1872 Fr. Burke preached at New York on 'The Christian Man the Man of the Day.'

Give me the man of faith. Give me the man of human power and intelligence, and the higher power of Divine principle and Divine love! With that man, as with the lever of Archimedes, I will move the world.

Let me speak to you of such a man. Let me speak to you of one whose form, as I beheld it in early youth, now looms up before me; so fills, in imagination, the halls of my memory, that I behold him as I beheld him years ago, majestic in stature, an eye gleaming with intellectual power, a mighty hand uplifted, waving, quivering with honest indignation; his voice thundering, like the voice of a god in the tempest, against all injustice and all dishonour. I speak of Ireland's greatest son, the immortal O'Connell. He came; he found a nation the most faithful, the most generous on the face of the earth; he found a people not deficient in any power of human intelligence or courage; chaste in their domestic relations, who for centuries had lived, and died, and suffered, to uphold the Faith and the Cross. He came, and he found Erin, after the rebellion of Ninety-eight, down-trodden in the blood-stained dust, and bound in chains. He raised that prostrate form; he struck the chains from those virgin arms, and placed upon her head a crown of free worship and free education.

This is culled from a small collection of his addresses

published in this country, but the *Irish American* reports a passage neither in it nor in the large edition brought out at New York, and we are aware that it was a revision effected by Fr. Burke.

He showed Ireland and the world that the highest genius can be exalted still more when consecrated to the sacred cause of religion. He taught the youth of Ireland the lesson they had learned so well from him—and from their fathers—that the secret of Ireland's strength and ultimate glory lies in Ireland's adherence to her ancient faith. He taught them that that man alone is sure to conquer every enemy who has learnt to conquer himself. He has contributed largely to make a priest of me, for amongst the tenderest recollections of my youth, amongst the things that made a deep impression on me as a boy, was when I stood in the chapel of Galway to see the great O'Connell—the man who shook the world—to see that great man coming to eight o'clock Mass in the morning, kneeling amongst us and receiving Holy Communion ; to watch him absorbed in prayer before God ; to read almost the grand thoughts that were passing through that pure mind ; to see him renewing again before heaven the vows that bound him to religion and country.

O'Connell's monster meetings were great historic events. At Tara, where the Ardrigh and sub-kings of Ireland had met in council, there were present, under O'Connell's banner, seven hundred and fifty thousand souls, 'aye, and bodies too,' as he himself said when correcting this announcement. The assembly had just been enrolled teetotallers by Fr. Mathew ; and to their cool brains were largely due the strict discipline which reigned. Sir Gavan Duffy says that more men were present than possessed Scotland when Wallace raised the standard of independence, or Athens in the days of her world renown. There was much in Tara to excite historic memories from its 'Harp that once' to its battle in '98. On August 15, 1843, future soldiers, destined to fight in the Crimea and Egypt, stood there beside embryo bishops and priests. Did Nicholas Burke, with the dash of his nature, steal a march on his mother and stand there too? The revised report in the *Irish American* of onef o his lectures

says :—'We were once nearly nine millions. *I remember seeing* 250,000 around Daniel O'Connell. You could scarcely find that number now in a whole province of Ireland.'[1]

In another address he made more detailed reference to the Tara meeting, though his impression again erred as to the size of the assemblage. But this may be explained by the fact that it was impossible from any one point to see the entire meeting; the hill rose abruptly high from the bosom of the plain; the people stood thick as bearded corn. Thousands could not get near the hill at all. The present writer, then a boy, was present, and could not even see the platform from which O'Connell spoke. Tara had been the scene of a battle between the King's troops and the insurgents, who from the way they wore their hair were nick-named 'croppies.'

In the early morning there was a tent pitched upon the hill-top; there was an altar erected, and an aged priest went to offer up the Mass for the people. Women with grey heads, who were blooming maidens in '98, came from every side; and they all knelt round the 'Croppy's Grave'; and just as the priest began the Mass, and the two hundred thousand on the hill-sides and in the vales below were uniting in adoration, a loud cry of wailing pierced the air. It was the Irish mothers and the Irish maidens pouring out their souls in sorrow, and wetting with their tears the shamrocks that grew out of the 'Croppy's Grave.'[2]

Nicholas was a youth of strong impulse, and his views were largely shaped by the books and the men to whose influence he bowed. It will be seen that though in '43 a strong disciple of the moral force policy of O'Connell, yet in '46 his sympathies went with Young Ireland. This change was entirely produced by what he read. Thomas Davis had urged that Ireland's then scanty stock of books should be increased.

[1] 'Catholicity as Revealed in the Character of the Irish People.' New York.

[2] 'The History of Ireland as told in her Ruins.' New York, April 5, 1872. But memories other than political were in Burke's mind when he visited Tara. It was on that hill that St. Patrick, holding aloft a shamrock, preached to the pagan people, and explained to them the mystery of the Trinity.

The influence on the young mind of Ireland of such works would be incalculably great. Boys who read of their own will, read intently; they are edified and instructed with Sandford and Merton; they are loyalists with Falkland, and patriots with Lord Edward. The writer of books popular among boys may calculate on revolutionising a country at the outside in thirty years.

A journalist who met Fr. Burke in Philadelphia has given us the fruit of some impressions he gathered.

When Davis endeavoured to waken into life the dead chivalry of Connaught, the last refuge of the Catholic Celt, and the last battle-field of Irish independence, he little thought that a youthful reader was destined to kindle anew the love of faith and fatherland in Irish hearts in every quarter of the globe by the magic power of true eloquence. Little did the gifted poet of 'Young Ireland' know that his noble poem, 'The West's Asleep,' sent the blood burning through the veins of a light-hearted, bright-eyed youth of Galway. I can fancy how young Burke felt as he read the following inspiring lines of Davis:

'And often in O'Connor's van
To triumph dashed each Connaught clan—
And fleet as deer the Norman ran
Through Corlieu's Pass and Ardrahan,
And later times saw deeds as brave;
And glory guards Clanricarde's grave—
Sing, Oh! they died their land to save,
At Aughrim's slopes and Shannon's wave.'[1]

Fr. Burke in one of his extempore lectures referred to the man whose poetry left so deep an impression on him.

Although Moore made every true heart and every noble mind melt into sorrow at the contemplation of Ireland's wrongs, as they came home to every sympathetic breast upon the wings of Ireland's ancient melody, yet he said to the harp of his country:—

'Go sleep with the sunshine of fame on thy slumbers,
Till waked by some hand less unworthy than mine.'

A hand less unworthy came—a hand more loyal and true than even his was—the immortal Thomas Davis. He and the men whose hearts beat with such high hope for young Ireland seized the sad, silent harp of Erin, and sent forth another thrill in the invitation to the men of

[1] *Standard* [Philadelphia], July 14, 1883.

the North to join hands with their Catholic brethren—to the men of the South to remember the glories of 'Brian the Brave.' To the men of Connaught, he seemed to call forth Roderick O'Connor from his grave at Clonmacnoise. He rallied Ireland in that year so memorable for its hopes and for the blighting of those hopes. He and the men of the *Nation* did what this world has never seen in the space of time, by the sheer power of Irish genius, by the sheer strength of Young Ireland's intellect; the *Nation* of '43 created a national poetry, a national literature, which no other country can equal. Under the magic voices and pens of these men, every ancient glory of Ireland stood forth again. I remember it well. I was but a boy at the time; but I recollect with what startled enthusiasm I would arise from reading 'Davis's Poems'; and it would seem to me that before my young eyes I saw the dash of the Brigade at Fontenoy. It would seem as if my young ears were filled with the shout that resounded at the Yellow Ford and Benburb—the war cry of the Red Hand, 'LAM DEARG ABU'—as alien hosts were swept away, and, like snow under the beams of the hot sun, melted before the Irish onset.

But a reaction of calm came. In a lecture on 'The Church the Salvation of Society,' our Dominican says:—

> The Church maintained the rights of the people, whenever those rights were unjustly invaded by those in power. But, to the people, in their turn, this Church has always preached patience, docility, obedience to law, legitimate redress, when redress was required. She has always endeavoured to calm their spirit, and to keep them back, even under sore oppression, from the remedy which the world's history tells us has always been worse than the disease—viz., the remedy of rebellion.

Be this as it may, Burke's sympathies in '46 were, as we have said, on the side of Young Ireland. The death of Davis came as a heavy blow and intensified the boy's devotion to his memory. It may be mentioned as introductory to the following that a new writ for Galway town had been issued on the death of Sir Valentine Blake in 1846. The Right Hon. J. H. Monahan obtained 510, and Mr. Anthony O'Flaherty 506 votes.

Fr. Burke (writes Mr. Meehan) was wont to recount his experi-

ences of those days in a humorous way. The older members of our race, who watch the progress of Irish agitation in the English Parliament, will remember the shock the 'Repeal Party' received when Dr. Power, one of the members for Cork, and the brother of the then Vicar-General of New York, deserted the Repealers in the legislature, and voted openly with the Ministry on a question on which the Irish members were in opposition to the Government. He got as his reward the Governorship of the British Colony of Santa Lucia, in the West Indies. The next break was when Monahan—another Repealer—took office as Attorney-General. He was one of the members for Galway, and the 'Young Ireland' Party determined to make the issue on office-taking in his case, and fight the battle against him, though they had not a hope of defeating him —the influence of 'Conciliation Hall,' as it stood then—the whole power of the Government, and all the local authorities being against them. Nevertheless, they sent down from the Confederation in Dublin a delegation composed of Smith O'Brien, Thomas Francis Meagher, John B. Dillon, Richard O'Gorman, and Michael Doheny, to fight the battle of Nationalism. When the delegates got to Galway they found that the game was already lost. The Government had adopted Monahan as their candidate, and there was no chance for the 'Young Ireland' man. Nevertheless, the young 'revolutionists' fought inch by inch the election, which in those times often ran for weeks. It was before the days of railroads in Ireland, and the expected orators had to travel from Dublin by coach. The roads were heavy, the weather adverse, and when the time came at which the expected speakers should have appeared to fire the audience, there was no evidence that even the stage coach containing them was anywhere within sight. It was suggested that they had better put up 'Young Burke' to fill the time until some of the looked-for celebrities should arrive. Accordingly the future Dominican was hoisted on the platform, and, as he used to say himself, was getting off one of his best school-boy rhetorical efforts, when some 'unreconstructed' old Irelander in the crowd cried out, 'Ah! go 'long out o' that, Nicky Burke, or I'll tell your mother what a goum (fool) you're making of yourself.' Fr. Burke used to relate this anecdote of his first appearance as a public orator with great humour, adding that he never dreaded criticism afterwards as he feared that threatened by his Galway co-patriot in the days when he was yet subject to the parental jurisdiction.

The handwriting on the wall created not more complete

collapse. Just as gossiping Galwegians say that had Burke married he might possibly have become M.P. and Chief Justice, others aver that if he had not succumbed to this sneer the tiro tribune might have found himself in '48 shoulder to shoulder with Meagher and O'Brien, and have enriched 'Political Speeches from the Dock' with another sample of sensation oratory.

The effort, though an early one, was yet not his first.

While wearing a bib I remember climbing up to a platform built on barrels, and spouting freely. After I had gone to bed my mother heard of it, and disturbed my dreams of oratoric glory by administering a condign rouser.

> 'Hail, healthful Exercise, whose bracing charm
> Makes young blood tingle and keeps old blood warm!'[1]

Wat Burke and his wife were strong disciples of O'Connell, whose policy of moral force had been opposed by Young Ireland.[2] A Galway election at that day was an elaborate incident:—

Night and day the combatants were at work (writes Meagher). For more than a week they fought. From dawn to sundown the battle surged and thundered within the Court House. From sundown to dawn the theatre, the lanes, the streets, the suburbs, the roads all around, were scenes of furious action.

The theatre was a ridiculous old building. At seven o'clock every evening of the contest, that paintless, lustreless, dishevelled temple of the drama, was in possession of the stormiest crowd. Pit, boxes, galleries, every seat, every standing place, from floor to ceiling, were black with people—even to the orchestra.

Instead of trombones, fiddles, and kettledrums, were devoted Repealers, who beat time with their heels, and, previously to the chair being taken, enthusiastically whistled 'Garryowen.' One of these performers was a man of huge limb, with shoulders broad enough to carry a dray, while the girth and shape of his arm recalled the colossal pugilist of Crotona, or 'Hugh' in 'Barnaby Rudge.' Every inch as sinewy and as large, he was as wild and shaggy in appearance, and almost as desperate in his onslaughts.

[1] Fr. Burke to the Poor Clares.

[2] E. N. Davies, Esq., M.D. (chairman of the Galway meeting), to the Author.

About seven the chair was usually taken—it had been the judgment seat of the Doge in the *Merchant of Venice*, and had supported in their dying moments several dynasties of kings and queens. One evening the orators were half an hour late.[1] The people, growing impatient, resolved on something by way of a change, and had it. When at last they arrived they beheld the chair placed close to the foot-lights, and a number of legs and arms, and big sticks, flourishing on all sides, and keeping time to the rollicking song, 'I am a ranting, roving blade.'

One morning a man sought the attorney who acted as conducting agent, and, declaring that there were no less than eleven cases of assault against him, asked what he had best do? 'Make it a dozen,' replied the lawyer. He left the court and did so.

To another trivial incident Fr. Burke made some reference in a sermon preached at Brooklyn.

What greater reproach can you put upon a man than to say 'You turned your coat; you have shifted your politics!' I remember once when I was a boy seeing a man in Galway who became a great 'Repealer' and wanted to get into Parliament. His principles were well known; up to that time he was a Tory. He came into the Court House, and a gentleman there, wanting to tell the people how he had changed his opinions, took off his coat and turned it inside out. I feel the impropriety of illustrating, on an occasion like this, my arguments with such familiar examples.[2]

Fr. Burke, in fact, had been lecturing so much, and told so many stories, that for a moment he thought he was on the platform and not in the pulpit. He stated at the Catholic University, Dublin, that once in the Opera House, Philadelphia, where 6,000 heads surged before him, he made a large

[1] It was here that the incident noticed by Mr. Meehan doubtless occurred. The chairman—probably because he had not arrived—fails to remember young Burke's speech. But Miss Burke *confirms* the account, including the threat to report Nicholas to his mother. He often described his complete collapse when the inflated rhetoric of a boy had been stung by a puncturing point.

[2] 'The Principle of Christian Life,' sermon preached at St. Paul's Church, Brooklyn, U.S., October 20, 1872

sign of the cross before beginning, and an Irish voice cried out, 'Long life to you, Father Tom.'

The angry warmth of the election over, work and fun were by turns resumed. Pantomime tricks were now relinquished in favour of higher comedy. Galway from time immemorial had been the port most frequented by foreigners. Mr. Andrew Lynch remembers young Burke wending his way to the docks and accosting the foreign sailors in gibberish accompanied by shrugs and other ambiguous action. Replies as clear as Cherokee fluently fell, only to be overwhelmed by an avalanche of gibberish. The foreign sailors generally got angry in the end, whereupon Nicholas simulated fury until a crowd would collect and the water-bailiff threatened to interfere.

But his mother knew that these were mere lovers' quarrels, and prayed that in a moment of impulse he might not join some foreign ship which 'rode the waters like a thing of life' to find in the 'land of the cypress and myrtle' a home festooned with romance.

Nicholas had such an aptitude for expressing himself in the *patois* of foreign tongues that his father often utilised him as an interpreter in interviews with ship captains—his object being to effect large sales of biscuit. Miss Burke says her brother was not only a first-rate salesman, but a capital accountant. The same is recorded of St. Francis of Assisi—the father of Mendicant Friars.

'Walter Burke (observes Fr. Mullins, O.P.) occupied a respectable status as a trader, and got contracts for supplying ship-biscuits to the maritime service.' More fortunate than the episcopal hero of the ditty which he loved to chant, he had now an heir with marked ability to succeed him, but the mother's daydream continued unbroken.

The father thought to keep him at the trade, being handy in shifting biscuits in the great oven (observes Mr. Lynch), but he never worked in the actual manufacture of bread. Bakers' ap-

prentices were a wild lot at that day; and Mrs. Burke was anxious to rescue her son from the risks involved in such association. Whether to stimulate the ambition of the boy or not, Wat Burke was fond of dwelling on the history of Barney Hughes, originally a working baker in Belfast, and who at last was able not only to give a site for a new Catholic church, but to put down 1,000*l.* as his personal donation. The Orangemen decided not to buy his bread. Hughes said, 'I'll make them beg for it and pay for it.' In the famine year, when the peasantry made a raid on his bread-carts and carried off their contents, he reloaded them (Wat said) and sent all back to the same place for distribution among the poor.

Thus, while he tried to awaken the boy's ambition for commercial enterprise, he would urge at the same time a fine example of Christian charity. Soon a more practical school for such inculcations was afforded.

His contracts for the supply of ship-biscuits (Miss Burke said, addressing the present writer) left in his lofts a great quantity of biscuit sweepings, which my mother boiled down with beef soup, for a number of famishing creatures. I remember with what tribulation she one day witnessed the boy who was carrying out the pot let it fall and the contents spill on the pavement. But she was resolved that this disappointment should not extend to the poor, and promptly sent them out a satisfying supply of loaves.

The law of charity which Nicholas heard preached by his pious mother, he himself continued to preach unto the end. Thirty years after, he said:—

If a man come to you or me and says, 'Relieve me, I am in want,' we ask him the measure of his wants. If we find that he is in no great pressure of poverty we may of course relieve him, but we are not absolutely bound to give him our money or means. If that man come to us in great necessity and tell us, with truth, 'I have not broken bread to-day and I don't know where to turn for my day's food,' we are bound, because of his want, to relieve him; and that which was left to our own free disposition a moment ago becomes a precept. You cannot refuse him, no matter how poor you may be; like the widow mentioned in Scripture, you are bound to divide with him the last measure of meal and the last cruse of oil.[1]

[1] *Cork Examiner*, February 5, 1877. All that Fr. Burke said, his good

This sermon was preached at Cork.

It was observed by the Dominican Fathers of that city that 'trifles sufficed to amuse and interest him. During his sojourn at our convent here he would employ intervals of leisure in watching on the quays the sailors engaged in converse, or at their work.'

When Fr. Burke, in the zenith of his fame, withdrew from the hum of adulation and wandered daily to the coal-begrimed docks to contemplate sailors hauling, smoking, or conversing, was he moved by the thoughts of an earlier day?

Who can tell what revolved in that mind when he was seen to brood over the objects just described? Was he thinking of the turning-points in his own life? Just as an empire was saved by the cackling of a goose, he once said that he might have been saved by the scolding of an aged nun. If the apple had not fallen, where would have been Newton's principle? That the mind of Thomas Burke was employed in higher thoughts than might at first sight be supposed, seems the more likely from the following, which comes to us from a venerable superioress of the Order of Charity:—

Once, when wandering along the strand, at Salthill, Galway, accompanied by friends, he was observed to lag behind and pause as if in contemplation of the waves as they rolled in unbroken from Labrador. 'On what are you ruminating?' a friend asked. 'I'm just thinking that if it were not for the providence of God I might now be a baker's apprentice, drunk every day of the week.'

Intemperance prevailed to a grave extent in Galway at

mother more than literally exemplified. 'In the famine times,' writes Fr. Clarke, S.J., and we give the statement entirely on his authority, 'Mrs. Burke took a family of starving children into the house and fed them with her own children, making them all kneel down and say the rosary before each meal.' In all this she imitated St. Dominic, the originator of the rosary, who, when a great famine ravaged Palencia, laboured to relieve the poor. Trifles of this sort may have helped to turn her son's thoughts towards the Dominicans; and he had read in Hardiman that it was Nicholas Lynch, a Dominican, who in 1627 restored the devotion of the rosary in Galway.

this time; and, as Mr. Lynch[1] says, the bakers' apprentices were, for the most part, very demoralised. Even some of the little boys whom our stripling knew were smitten by the contagion.

I have myself known (he says) a little boy, before he was fourteen years of age, to become a confirmed, irreclaimable drunkard, because every time that his father sent him to the public-house for whiskey or gin, the child took his share of it before he brought it home! What remains of the joys that ought to surround that family at their domestic hearth? Not a vestige of tenderness or of comfort. Demoralisation is there; poverty comes in at last in its most hideous form, and brings in its train all the vices, all the crimes, and all the bestiality which are forced upon those who have the misfortune to be in that last and most degraded form of poverty.[2]

How different the example that Wat Burke presented to *his* son!—

Oh! my friends, what a blessing it is for the grown man in after-life to be able to look back to the days of his early boyhood, and say of the old man that is in his grave, 'I never heard a bad word from him; I never saw him in a position unworthy of a man; I never heard from his lips, nor saw in his life, anything that could teach me sin or vice. His example, by which my character was formed, was as that of a saint—a perfect Christian.' This is the highest blessing that perhaps God can give to man; and it is the precious blessing which the drunkard denies to the children given to him by God.[3]

O'Connell's monster meetings ended with his imprisonment. On appeal to the House of Lords, the gates of his prison opened amid a grand ovation, but a subtle disease had already begun to prey, and he walked forth with faltering step. The Irish Confederation, a powerful league, designed by Young Ireland to supplant the policy of O'Connell, started into formidable vitality.

Cathedrals and parish churches, convents and monasteries, col-

[1] Mr. Andrew Lynch is a highly respectable baker in Galway.
[2] Lecture on Temperance, *Irish Star*, June 21, 1873.
[3] Lecture on Temperance (inedited), *Irish Star*, June 21, 1873.

leges and schools, orphanages and hospitals, sprang up over the land (says Fr. Burke); disciplinary laws, of necessity relaxed during the wild terrors of persecution, were again enforced; the sacraments solemnly and properly administered; the beautiful devotions of the Catholic Church publicly practised; the young instructed; the Gospel preached; the people sanctified.

In the midst of all this glorious work came a period the most terrible in our history.[1]

But this Fr. Burke will describe in the next chapter.

[1] Oration n the Pro-Cathedral, Dublin, Nov. 27, 1878.

CHAPTER III.

A.D. 1847. ÆTAT. 17.

THE hand of God was now to fall upon Ireland. The Angel of Famine and Death was spreading his wings over the land. The people who retained strength to move were about to rush from their island home as from a pest-house, and in their hundreds of thousands seek and find refuge beyond the Western Ocean.[1]

These words were used by Fr. Burke when preaching in 1877 the *éloge* of Bishop Moriarty. A lecture on O'Connell, in New York, five years previously, adverts to the same time.

Well I remember those fearful scenes! Then came the day when the news spread from lip to lip—'There is famine in the land; and we must all die.' So said eight millions in that terrible year of '46—eight millions in that awful autumn that came upon us, when the people 'cried for bread and there was no one to break it to them.' The strong man lay down and died. The tender maidens, the pure and aged matrons of Ireland, lay down and died. They were found dead by the roadside, unburied; they were found in their shallow graves—scarcely buried.[2]

A sermon at West Chester, U.S., presents a more detailed narrative of some thrilling incidents that he had himself seen.

I was but sixteen years of age, yet old enough to know good and evil, old enough to appreciate joy and sorrow. I found myself on the western coast of the island, in the midst of the people, when it pleased the Almighty God to send down His last and most terrific visitation upon us all; when the Angel of Famine and Death spread his wings, and the baneful shadow passed over the land. I have

[1] Sermon preached in the Cathedral, Killarney, at the celebration of the Requiem Office for the Bishop of Kerry.

[2] Lecture on O'Connell at the Academy of Music, New York, May 13, 1872.

seen strong men lie down in the streets of the city, and, with ashy lips, murmur a last cry for food, and faint away and die! I have seen the dead infant lying on the breast of the dead mother as she lay by the wayside! I have seen the living infant trying to draw from the breast of the mother who was dead sustenance for its infant life! Oh, God! in Thy mercy let me never again see such sights! Was she faithful or faithless to every tradition of holiness? Was she still a nation of martyrs and of saints? Ay, my friends. One case out of ten thousand: There was a family, far away on the western coast of the island. They were three days without food. The father and mother were there; the young man, the young girls were there. There was no work to be done; the country was a waste; the Angel of Death had swept his hand over it; the ungrateful soil refused to give sustenance to its sons; they were living upon the dock-leaves and the grass, until they were so enfeebled as to be no longer able to go out and seek them; and the whole family were here and there stretched upon the floor, dying in the slow agonies of hunger, when a sleek fanatical lady came in. On her arm she had a basket; and in it she had bread and meat. She had waited for a particular day; and that day happened to be Good Friday. She looked around upon the dying intermingled with the dead; she took out the bread and the meat, and laid them before the dying ones, and said, 'If you wish to live, eat!' With their dying hands they pushed her away; they averted their eyes from that which was the staff of life, and said, 'On this day Christ died for us; and the Church commands us not to eat these things.' She returned; she put back her bread and her meat into the basket and walked out of the house; and God only knows how many curses have been upon her head because she made the life of this world the trial of a people's faith.

Another example, and I have done. A good woman, who lived on the western shores of Ireland, a few miles from my native Galway, was accustomed, every Sunday, to be present at the Mass, and on the first Sunday of every month to receive Holy Communion. The famine came. She was then an old woman. Her sons had gone away to look for work, with a promise that they would come to her and keep her in life if they could. Her daughters had emigrated; and she was left alone in the world, with her youngest, a boy of twelve or fourteen years of age. They lived together, the old woman and the boy; and when the distress came upon the country, to such a degree that all were dying, the boy cried for food, and the

old woman had nothing to give him. At length, wasting away under her eyes, while she gave him all that she had, denying herself, one day he laid his head upon her bosom and died. She was so weakened by hunger that she was not able to go out of the house to the neighbours to get them to assist in burying him. For two days he lay dead upon the floor; and she dying—dying with a broken heart, without one to put a cup of water to her lips, dying of hunger and of thirst—she lay for these two days and nights beside the dead. On the third morning, which was Sunday, she heard the chapel bell ringing for Mass. The country at the time was a desert, no neighbours about it. When she heard the bell, she crawled on her hands and feet out of the house, and tried to take herself to the chapel, about a mile away. Three times she fell on the road. Those who were nearly stricken as bad as she was, as they passed, lifted her up and laid her against the hedge and gave her a drink of water from the running stream. She fell again and again. At length she crawled—crawled until she came to a point on the road where she could see the chapel doors open. The priest was at the altar saying the Mass. When she caught sight of the altar she lifted up her hands and eyes to God and cried, 'Eternal praise to the Blessed Virgin's Son!' and fell back a corpse.[1]

'They were dying,' an English newspaper said; 'as a race they were going with a vengeance.' Yes, they went in thousands and hundreds of thousands 'with a vengeance.' Thousands lay down in their martyr graves, and their souls went to God; and hundreds of thousands turned their backs reluctantly—weeping for the land of their sires, and went into foreign climes where wealth and fortune awaited their intellect and Irish energy. And hither they brought the love that sanctified those that they left in their graves behind them.[2]

Fr. Burke's impression of what he had read during the famine was correct. One of the most powerful leaders that appeared in the *Times* stated that a Celt in Connemara would soon be as rare as a Red Indian in New York.

It was at this time, when returning from a rural ramble, he stumbled over the dead body of a beggar. He merely muttered, in the spirit of Jerrold, that it might be the cast

[1] 'The Hidden Saints of Ireland.' St. Raymond's, West Chester, U.S.A. All Saints' Day, 1872.

[2] *Ibid.*

garment of an angel. Preaching at St. Joseph's, Liverpool, on September 5, 1880, he said, 'If I were to live a thousand years, never could I banish from my memory, or shut out from my eyes, the terrible sights which I then beheld.' Some passages in his exordium on the death of Cardinal Cullen supply a sequel to those scenes.

The storm passed away, bearing on its wings the millions of Irish victims and exiles, and leaving Ireland stunned by the greatness of her ruin. There seemed no hope for the nation. Ruined homesteads, abandoned villages, impoverished towns, workhouses filled to overflowing, prisons crowded with political prisoners, hospitals unable to hold the victims of cholera which came in the wake of war and famine; trade and commerce destroyed, industry paralysed, a population wasted by disease and privation, scarcely able to realise life after such awful contact with death, and crushed by separation from so many loved hearts.

To this may be added a climax found in his lecture on Civil and Religious Liberty, at Hartford, Connecticut. 'The hand of God was succeeded by the hand of man—the exterminating hand of the landlord.'

The special knowledge he acquired by personal observation of the sufferings of God's poor gave him an enormous vantage ground in his exhaustless sermons preached in the cause of mercy and charity. 'Blessed is he that understandeth concerning the needy and the poor,' saith Psalm xl. 'What is this mystery?' he asked. 'It is to explain it and to awaken your consciences to a good understanding of it that I have come here to-day.' Thus he spoke at Passage, co. Cork, when unlocking the hand of avarice, on August 10, 1873.

To come back to the famine. No sorrow affected Burke long. With the vigorous philosophy of his mind, and the hearty buoyancy of his nature, he rose superior to such influences. His religious bias was fostered not a little by lonely rambles and explorations among the former abbey homes of the Irish Dominicans and Franciscans. From groping among the stones he turned to the books which

told of the founders, and his mind soon became full of St. Dominic.

Six hundred years after St. Columbkille's death (he tells us) a man was born away among the olive groves of Spain. This was St. Dominic, a man of noble if not imperial birth. He was filled with the love of God. He found the Church disturbed by heresy on the one side, and on the other by hundreds of thousands of armed men trying to enforce heavenly truth with the arms of flesh, while they were injuring the cause by the immorality of their lives. He restored peace in the Church by his preaching, a feat that was impossible to all the forces of Christendom. After a while the Dominican Friars spread to Ireland, and the Irish people took the white-robed missionaries to their hearts.[1]

Burke's enthusiastic love of music magically re-peopled the deserted walls around him. He heard the loud hosanna, 'the full tide of sacred song swell through those wonderful cloisters whose very ruins still command our admiration and move us to tears.' So he said in his sermon on Church Music at 'St. Mary Star of the Sea' in 1859. An American lecture—'The History of Ireland as told in Her Ruins'—fondly retraces old paths.

I am come to speak to you of the glory and the shame, and the joy and the sorrow, that these ruins so eloquently tell of; and when I look upon them, in spirit now, my mind sweeps over the intervening ocean, and I stand in imagination under the ivied and moss-covered arches of Athenry, or Sligo, or Clare-Galway.

Describing the havoc wrought by Elizabeth, he went on to say that £5 was the price set upon the head of a friar, the same as upon the head of a wolf.

These venerable ruins tell the tale of the nation's woe. As long as it was merely a question of destroying a Cistercian or a Benedictine Abbey, there were so few of these in the land that the people did not feel it much. But when the persecution came upon the *Bhreahir*, as the friar was called—the man whom everybody knew—the man whom all came to look up to for consolation in sorrow; when it came upon him—then it brought affliction to every village, to every

[1] Fr. Burke at Swords, January 5, 1882.

man in Ireland. There were, at this time, upwards of eighty convents of Franciscans and Dominicans in Ireland. There were nearly a thousand Irish Dominican priests when Henry began his persecution. He was succeeded, after a brief interval of thirty years, by Elizabeth. How many Dominicans, think you, were then left in Ireland? O God! there were four only! All the rest of these heroic men had stained their white habit with the blood that they shed for God and for their country.

Black records follow which must not be opened, and then, adds Fr. Burke,

came a little breathing-time. In fifty years there were six hundred Irish Dominican priests in Ireland again. They studied in Spain, in France, in Italy. These were the youth, the children of Irish fathers and mothers, who cheerfully gave them up, though they knew, almost to a certainty, that they were devoting them to a martyr's death; but they gave them up for God. They studied in foreign lands; and they came back again, by night and by stealth, and they landed upon the shores of Ireland; and when Cromwell came he found six hundred Irish Dominicans upon the Irish land. Ten years after, and again the Irish Dominican preachers assembled to count up their numbers. How many were left out of the six hundred? But one hundred and fifty; four hundred and fifty had perished—had shed their blood for their country, or had been shipped away to Barbadoes as slaves. These are the tales their ruins tell. Oh, if these moss-grown stones could speak, they would tell how the people gave up everything they had, for years and years, as wave after wave of successive persecutions rolled over them, rather than renounce their glorious faith or priesthood.

With all this in his mind, Nicholas Burke became fired to follow in the footsteps of the old band, and it may, indeed, be said that he rose as a giant from the graves of the martyred Dominicans.

Ireland (he exclaimed), what shall I say of thee? O mother, greatest and most faithful of all the nations, fairest and most loving of all the daughters of the Church! The queen of martyrs on this earth, Ireland, for three hundred years, like the heroic mother of the Maccabees, had stood erect, cross in hand, whilst her children fell around her. Yet she bore it with a good courage for the hope that she had in God.

—words spoken in 1878 at the solemn office for Cardinal Cullen.

With 'Hardiman' under his arm, the boy is found pursuing with keen interest these visitations.

The proximity of the West Chapel and graveyard of the Dominicans fostered his fondness for both; and the remains of his father and mother have been since consigned to their hallowed embrace.[1] Nicholas found himself constantly drawn towards the shattered tombs of this cemetery—then open to all trespassers. In happy hours, thirty years after, he would allude to those days, and to amuse a brother friar describe the little girls of the Çladdagh dancing on the flat tombstones of the Dominican graveyard. He would whistle the air to which they had capered, and hold out the skirts of his own habit with a grotesque grace. But when he mimicked the good Prior, rushing out to drive them from the sacrilege and puffing in the pursuit, the effect was indescribably comical.[2]

These old tombs were to him the cradle of thought. There some of his kinsfolk slept. Speaking in St. Gabriel's Church, New York, he said :—

I remember when I was a boy my mother taking me to the graves where her father and mother and those who went before her were buried ; and also bringing me to the grave where my father's people were buried, and there, kneeling down, pouring forth her soul in prayer. She would make pilgrimages to these sacred places, and shed tears for those who had died twenty and thirty years before, as though they were lying recently dead, so fresh and green were they in her glorious Irish memory. And so it is with our people. They love their dead. The very dead in the Irish grave in the green soil

[1] Many of these must have been English Dominicans. Fr. Williams, the present Provincial of England writes: 'They took refuge in Ireland, Scotland, and Belgium.'

[2] On revisiting the Dominican graveyard since its enclosure, one fails to find the ruin which the wall professes to surround ; a remark which applies to many similarly preserved holy places throughout Ireland, and almost leads to the suspicion that the 'remains' within must have been utilised in building the wall without.

over the ocean are the strongest bonds that bind you and me to the land of our birth this night.

Fruit gathered from the rural graveyards of Ireland is found in many of his lectures. Thus, in 'The Supernatural Life of the Irish People':—

Ireland looks forward to whatever of prosperity, whatever of freedom, whatever of glory is in store for her. She will not seek it before its time, with rash or rebellious hand. She has learned too well the lesson of patience. She will not seek it until God, in the revolution of ages, sends it to her; but it will certainly come, because that nation has preserved its national existence by preserving its supernatural life in God. It will not always be night. The clouds will not always lie there. It will not always be that the Irishman is uncertain of the footing that he has in the land, until he lies down in the grave. It will not always be, as I heard once an old woman say, weeping in a churchyard, 'I had land, I had a place in this country, I had a house. They took them all from me, and nothing remains but this grave.' It will not always be thus. Justice, glory, power, are in the hands of God. Glory and power are His gifts to every nation. To some that glory and that power is given even after they have forsaken their God; but when it comes to dear old Ireland it will be a reward for her faith, and for her love of Christ.

It has been said (says Fr. Burke in one of his sermons) that the highest ambition of most Irish parents is to rear a son for the sanctuary, and this, which is sometimes said by the enemies of the Church as if it were a reproach, is the grandest testimony to the undying faith and devotion of a martyred people. But it is not every household that can produce a priest. The Lord must truly build and guard such a house. There we must find a virgin faith sanctified by traditions of unbroken loyalty to the Church of God. There must the young Levite breathe from infancy an atmosphere of purity and domestic piety. The voice of prayer must be familiar to him from his earliest youth. From his mother's lips and the example of his father must he learn the first lessons of what is destined to develop into sacerdotal holiness.[1]

One night Nicholas Burke heard a sermon which clenched his future career. 'Woe unto me if I do not preach the Gospel of God!' rang in his ear for days. At last his final decision was taken to enter the sanctuary and preach 'Christ crucified.'

[1] 'Month's Memory of Cardinal Cullen,' Nov. 27, 1878.

This resolve was remarkable. Mr. Haverty, when noticing O'Connell, Sheil, and other lay orators, wrote in 1872, from material gathered from Fr. Burke's lips—'It was confidently predicted that young Burke would, at a not distant day, make a figure as prominent as any of them in the political arena.' Mr. O'Flanagan, B.L., who also learned from Fr. Burke some account of these days, adds: 'In a short time the contest of election, the jar of politics, the battle between Whig and Tory, the emulations of old and young Ireland were to know him no more.'

Shiel, Wyse, Rice, and other popular orators had risen to be British Ministers; the coif and the ermine rewarded the rhetoric of others, but indeed the talents of Nicholas Burke were so varied that, no matter what path in life he chose, wealth and honour were sure to come. In his mind's eye, however, he saw nought but the halo of Heaven—his ambition looked not lower; he preferred a life of self-sacrifice to worldly honours; and vows of voluntary poverty gave place to the vows of vanity, whereby young Radicals like Disraeli told the world that its highest distinctions should yet be theirs.

Fr. Burke mentioned to the good nuns to whom he had been for twenty years the spiritual adviser that he strengthened himself for his vocation by making a general confession. 'When I finished (he said) I took up my cap, with a firm determination to turn over a new leaf and a blank one, and to cover it with the record of good work done.'

The Father to whom he applied for admission into the Order of Preachers (writes Fr. Towers) had himself no mean repute as a sacred orator. All acquainted with the late Father Thomas Raymond Rush will not consider these few words of praise out of place. This good Father knew Nicholas Burke intimately, and had formed a high idea of his mind and disposition; great, therefore, was his pleasure when he presented himself as a postulant for the Order. But, as there is no human happiness without alloy, so this choice of an Order was not

altogether pleasing to his good mother. For years her Confessor had been a holy Augustinian; she therefore wished that her son should assume the same habit; but when she saw that his predilection for the white-robed family of Dominic was not a boyish fancy, she cheerfully acquiesced.

The impression of Fr. Burke's sister, which we elicited before this fact reached us, was, that if Mrs. Burke had had to select any particular Order for her son it would have been the Franciscan, because her favourite Saint Anthony had belonged to it. Indeed, more than once a statement has been confidently made that Nicholas was at first about to join the Franciscans.

In the early years of our intimacy at Woodchester (writes the head of the Dominican Order in Ireland) he often spoke of the incidents of his religious vocation. But he never mentioned anything of the Franciscans. I heard the report when he became famous, and told it to him. He replied, 'There is no truth in it.'[1]

One or two circumstances not previously mentioned had tended to turn his thoughts towards the Dominicans. The brother of Mr. Winter, whose school he finally attended, was a Dominican Father of Galway much distinguished as a preacher. The Dominican Convent for nuns stood in Cross Street, near Wat Burke's house, and Nicholas had long served its morning Mass. These nuns follow the same rule as the Dominican Fathers, and are under the control of the same General.[2]

It was a pardonable boast with Fr. Rush before he died that, though the Order of Preachers had been for six hundred years pioneers of civilisation, not one of them had shed a more sustained light on Christendom than the youth he had often playfully checked at the Claddagh. His undiminished high

[1] Letter of the Very Rev. John T. Towers, O.P., to the author, Jan. 28, 1884.

[2] This fine institution has long since been removed from the ruined premises in Cross Street, and now flourishes in the rural grounds of Taylor's Hill, Galway. The old house still stands, a perfect memorial of the Spanish settlers. It passed through many vicissitudes, and even, after the nuns had been cruelly hunted from it, and previous to their re-entry, was converted into a barrack.

spirits did not prevent him from continuing to cherish an ardent love for the religious life ; and the sense within him of having a gift of speech only strengthened his desire to consecrate it to God's service. Other religious orders learned with regret that he was not to occupy a cell in their enclosures. But he saw that 'the monk must not remain in the cloister—that he must come out and show himself to the world. He must be brought to bear on society'—Fr. Burke's words when preaching on St. Dominic of Osman.

The modest West Chapel by the Claddagh seems to have been one of the first built after the relaxation of the Penal Laws.[1] So plain is it that Byron's line on St. Peter's—

Enter, its grandeur o'erwhelms thee not

—would apply equally, though in an opposite sense. It originally had a thatched roof, which was replaced long ago by one of stauncher stuff. A lecture by Fr. Burke on 'The History of Ireland' makes a touching allusion that ought not to be overlooked :—

We advance just half a century up the highway of time, and come upon that which has been familiar, perhaps, to many amongst you, as well as to me—the plain, unpretending little chapel, in some by-lane of the town or country, with its thatched roof, its low ceiling, its earthen floor, its wooden altar. What does this tell us? It tells of a people struggling against adversity—of a people making their first effort, after three hundred years of blood, to build up a house,

[1] On the petition of the people of Galway to Innocent VIII., the spot on which the West Chapel now stands was granted by Bull in 1488 to the Dominican Friars. That cruel warden, already noticed by Fr. Burke, who, in 1493, immolated his son at the shrine of public justice, erected its choir. In the reign of Elizabeth its treasures were scattered, and in 1642 Lord Forbes, landing here, took possession of this house, which he converted into a battery. He defaced the church, dug up the graves, and burnt the coffins and bones. In 1652 the monastery was razed to the ground to prevent its being converted by Cromwell into a fortification. The friars lingered round their ancient home of sanctity and peace just as Magdalen lingered by the empty tomb in Jerusalem. Early in the eighteenth century the Dominicans regained possession of their ancient convent, and in the visitation of 1731 it is reported by the mayor of Galway that on searching it 'he found ten chambers and eight beds, but could find none of the friars.'

however humble, for their God; it tells us of a people who had not yet shaken off the traditions of their slavery, upon whose hands the chains still hang, and the wounds inflicted by those chains are still rankling; it tells us of a people who scarcely yet knew how to engage in the glorious work of Church edification, because they scarcely yet realised the privilege that they were to be allowed to live in the land that bore them. Let us reverently bow down our heads and salute these ancient places—these ancient, humble little chapels, in town or country, where we—we men of middle age—made our first confession and received our first communion; let us salute these places, hallowed in our memories by the first, and therefore the strongest, the purest, holiest recollections and associations of our lives; and, pilgrims of history, let us turn into the dreary, solitary road that lies before us. It is a road of three hundred years of desolation; a road that is wet with tears and with blood; a road that is pointed out to us by the sign of the Cross, the emblem of the nation's faith, and by the site of the martyr's grave, the emblem of Ireland's undying fidelity to God.

After Emancipation the old West Chapel assumed a fresher, brighter air. Standing in a maritime suburb, it was frequented by the Catholic *élite*, who in that day thronged from adjoining counties to Salt Hill for the season. The Prior, Fr. Rush, whose portrait reveals a fine specimen of the traditional friar, smiled paternally on Nicholas, and the boy in turn looked into his genial face with responsive regard. His popularity was largely due to the fact that he took a leading part in every public movement, and always spoke with eloquence and to the point. Another Galway Dominican—not without interest for Nicholas—was Fr. Folan. The youth had once paused under the windows of his cell to hear him sing the old ditty 'Shule Agrah,' which he was famous for intoning with a strength of lung that well-nigh made itself heard at the Claddagh.

The Order of Preachers sustained their old prestige. The pulpit oratory of the West Chapel was above the average. The Dominican Fathers restored some fine functions of the Church, with nice attention to liturgical detail. Wat Burke

and his son listened reverently while Fr. Rush expounded the depth of Catholic truth; and Fr. Ralph, O.P., says that Wat was one of the sweetest of the singers who walked in Rosary procession, while Nicholas swung the censer and assisted in the Sanctuary choir.

While famine held its ghastly festival O'Connell died. His death, which occurred on his way to Rome a few months before Burke's departure for the same place, left Ireland fatherless. Our Dominican, standing by the Tribune's tomb at Glasnevin on the occasion of the translation of his remains, gives the sequel of a tragedy shadowed on a previous page:—

The people whom he had so faithfully served, whom he loved with a love second only to his love for God, were decimated by the dread visitation; nations trembled and men grew pale at the sight of Ireland's woe. Her tale of famine, of misery, of death was told in every land. Her people fled affrighted from the soil which had forgotten its ancient bounty, or died—their white lips uttering the last faint cry for bread. All this the aged father of his country saw. Neither his genius, nor his eloquence, nor his love could now save his people, and the spirit was crushed which had borne him triumphantly through all dangers and toil; the heart broke within him—that brave and generous heart which had never known fear, and whose ruling passion was love for Ireland. The martyred spirit, the broken heart of the great Irishman, led him to the holiest spot on earth, and with tottering steps he turned to Rome. The man whose terrible voice in life shook the highest tribunals of earth in imperious demand for justice to Ireland, now sought the Apostle's tomb, where from that threshold of heaven he might put up a cry for mercy to his country and his people, and pray God to accept the sacrifice of his life. Like the prophet king, he would fain stand between the people and the angel who smote them, and offer himself a victim and holocaust for the land he loved.

It was stated in the *New York Star*, and afterwards by other journals, that it was by the advice of Archbishop MacHale Burke went to Rome. On testing the accuracy of this statement, we learn that it is wholly untrue. The example of the gifted prelate, however, influenced the young Levite. When Dr. MacHale, at the head of his clergy,

addressed Fr. Burke on his return from America, the Dominican spoke of him as 'one whom as a boy he had read and heard of with wonder and delight; whom as a youth he had proposed to imitate; and whom as a man he had learned to regard with respect and love.'

The youth, as he tells us, was now known among his friends as 'the old gentleman;' but, he added, amid much laughter, 'I don't mean old Nick, you know.' This dropped from him in his lecture 'On the Church in America,' delivered at Cork in 1873.

The hour was now approaching when domestic ties must needs be severed. To this period of his life Fr. Burke made reference when describing in America the career of St. Laurence O'Toole:—

> The father, like an Irish father, gave up willingly the son whom he loved best of all; for it is the peculiarity of Irish parents to give to God the best that they have, and give it cheerfully, because 'God loveth a cheerful giver.' I have seen in other lands—in France and Italy—young men asking to be admitted to the priesthood, and the father and mother saying, 'How can we give him up? How can we sacrifice our child?' trying to keep him back with tears and entreaties. Oh, my friends! when I witnessed that, I thought of the old woman in Galway, who had no one but me, her only son; I thought of the old man, bending down towards the grave, with the weight of years upon him; and I thought of the poverty that might stare them in the face when their only boy was gone; and yet no tear was shed; no word of sorrow was uttered; but, with joy and pride, the Irish father and Irish mother knew how to give up their only son to the God that made him.

Speaking at St. Anthony's, Liverpool, on February 20, 1881, Fr. Burke said:—

> When the Emancipation Act passed the friars were persecuted. They were the only body in Catholic Ireland whose existence the Relief Bill refused to acknowledge; and I stand before you as a felon in the land, because of the habit that I wear.[1]

[1] This law, passed in 1829, has been suffered to remain a dead letter.

He was born emancipated; but in now assuming the *rôle* of a preaching friar he thus early showed how thoroughly he embraced the Cross.

Throughout the lectures and sermons which Fr. Burke delivered in many lands, he makes touching allusion to the pain of exile. Addressing an American audience, he said:—

Hear the lament of St. Columbkille, one of Ireland's greatest saints and sons, who banished himself, in penance, to the far island of Iona. He tells us that, when he wished to calm the sorrow of his heart, he generally sat upon the high rocks of the island, and turned his eyes to catch a glimpse of the faint outline of the shore of Ireland. 'From the high prow I look over the ocean; great tears are in my eyes, as I turn to Erin, where the song of the birds is so sweet; where the monks sing like the birds; where the young are so gentle, and the old so wise; where the men are so noble to look at, and the women so fair to wed.'[1]

The man who translates with such heart these forgotten pieces must have felt in his own case similar emotions. 'But once entered on the straight path,' we are told, 'he never faltered.' From his sermon on St. Laurence we learn something of the inner thought of the youth who, in answer to his vocation, exclaimed, 'I come!'—

Let no man deceive you; the best lover of God and of his country is the priest—the man who, in the days of his youth, in the days of his awakening passions, in the days when nature makes her loud demand for enjoyment—the man who then says, 'I will sacrifice my heart, my affection, my life, my body, and my soul'—for whom? For God alone? No; for he does not go into the desert; he goes out amongst his fellow-men; he grasps every man by the hand with a loving grasp, and he says, 'I belong to God and to you.' No man is so consecrated to his fellow-men as the priest; because he comes to them with a consecration from God. There is no man upon whom the people can fall back as they can upon the priest; for, no matter what angel of pestilence may hover in the midst of them

[1] 'Fair to wed' is printed thus in the lecture on *The Exiles of Erin*, published by Cameron and Ferguson, p. 231. Fr. Burke, quoting the same poem in his lecture on St. Columbkille, merely says, 'the women so fair.' See Haverty's *Lectures and Sermons of Fr. Burke*, 2nd series, p. 92.

—no matter what demon may scatter destruction around—every man may fly ; the priest alone must not, dare not, cannot fly, because he is sold to God and to his neighbour.

Undeterred by the famous words of Felicaja, 'Italia, Italia, o tu cui feo la sorte,'[1] and with which he was familiar through Byron's translation, our youth, wrapped in moral strength, decided on proceeding to Italy, and testing his vocation by a rigid novitiate. The shores of the Tiber were now to be traversed instead of the banks of Lough Corrib, the Apennines for the crags of Connemara. He fervently followed in the footsteps of the great Tribune, who, weary of politics, 'had sought the Apostle's tomb.'

What might be styled a four-leaved shamrock of coincidence marked this epoch. O'Connell—to whose power of moving the masses Fr. Burke has often been compared—had just died. The tread of the Irish exodus had begun—slow and solemn as the Dead March in *Saul*. All Hallows' College—which O'Connell helped to start in the teeth of much opposition—was now just ready to pour out its priests to minister to the thousands of Irish peopling the New World. And the man who was destined to bind them together in love of faith and fatherland—who was to rekindle and foster the finest feelings of religion, poetry, and patriotism in the hearts of Irish exiles—is found wending his way from Galway to Rome to begin his religious life.

Fr. Burke told Arthur Moore that his mother's last words to him when going away were never to speak to a soldier. From this it would seem that the old woman, knowing the chivalrous impulses of her boy, had fears lest military enterprise should wean him from his vocation.

The Midland Railway was then open only from Athlone to Dublin. The scenes which met his eye along the route were not calculated to cheer him.

[1] 'Thou who hast the fatal gift of beauty !'—*Childe Harold*, canto iv.

The domestic virtues and feelings of our people are so true and deep (he says, preaching at the Cathedral, Dublin), their affections so strong, as to add an intense bitterness to the sorrow of death and separation. Whoever wishes to see the sublimity of sorrow, has only to stand at a railway station in Ireland, and see the young emigrants leaving father and mother, kinsfolk and friends, behind them. It is impossible to witness such a scene without paying tribute to their grief by shedding involuntary tears. Thus the afflictions incidental to all peoples are deepened in Ireland by the quick susceptibilities and tender and strong affections of our race.

On arrival in Dublin, he presented himself at the old chapel house in Denmark Street, where he saw Fr. Conway and the other Fathers. Partly to account for his lank appearance, he remarked incidentally that his mother had placed the whole household on short commons in order to supply the famine-stricken poor who thronged her door.

The old route to Rome was from Dublin to Liverpool, and from thence, *viâ* Dieppe, to Civita Vecchia. Fr. Burke's cousin, the present Pastor of Oranmore, tells us that old Wat had formed some exaggerated idea as to the length of the sea voyage before him, and one hundredweight of sea-biscuits were specially made to sustain him throughout the passage. Nicholas saw no need for so large a stock, and, without hurting his father's feelings by declining it, quietly made over the biscuits to Fr. Quinn.

Miss Burke is of opinion that the seeds of her brother's subsequent sufferings were sown during this journey. Her impression is that he neglected himself, got cold; and if it had not been for the paternal care of Fr. Costello, a native of Galway, who also became a Dominican in Rome, the world might never have heard of 'Fr. Burke the preacher.'

This journey was made during the inclement winter of 1847. He described it as slow in the extreme. Part of the way the diligence was drawn by bullocks. Telling his beads, he sat cooped up in a close corner, and obliged to inhale breaths vilely redolent of garlic.

There were no through tickets then, and when paying my fare for part of the route I made a great blunder, one which the French official—who was a survivor of Napoleon's Imperial Guard—petulantly refused to rectify on my appealing to his sense of justice. My laic blood was now up; and I knew no way of stinging him but to exclaim, 'Bah! Vaterloo!' He scowled, and my chances of concession were not bettered. It was so dark at one time in the diligence that I persuaded an Italian to hold a light while I ate a cold chicken, promising to give him, as a reward, whatever was left of it.[1]

With a high heart (observes Judge O'Hagan) did Burke proceed to fulfil the spirit of his mission. Seven centuries have passed away since the saintly founder prescribed it as the special function of his sons to teach and preach the word of life to men, amongst whom then, as at all times, and never more than now, ignorance of the thing that it deeply concerns them to know is the malady most requiring the hand of the healer. It is a singular attestation to the tenacity of great ideas that the same order of friar preachers has in our own days produced two of the foremost pulpit orators of the world—in France Lacordaire, and in Ireland Thomas Burke.

Another fact quite as 'singular' claims record. Nearly every other religious order has undergone reforms which split them into various branches. That formed by Dominic alone remains intact.

How Nicholas Anthony Burke became known by the familiar name which Judge O'Hagan applies to him is easily explained. Every person who enters a conventual life takes a name in religion; and in his case was chosen that of Thomas Aquinas. He himself never much cared for the name of Nicholas, and he declared if ever he became old it would be still more objectionable.

Rome! How many thoughts fill the heart and rise to the lips at the sound of her name! (exclaims Father Burke). In the olden time God had given her the empire of the world, and all the nations bowed down before her universal sway. All that the earth contained of riches, power, and glory found its centre in Imperial Rome, and men thought that she had attained the summit of her greatness when the

[1] To Rev. Fr. Hickey, O.P.

whole world acknowledged her empire and the wisdom and justice of those laws which enabled her to govern all that the valour of her armies had conquered. But far higher was the destiny and glory yet in store for Rome. Her universal temporal empire but foreshadowed the wider and more lasting empire which was to be hers as the head and centre of God's Universal Church. Rome was to be the Jerusalem of the new law, the heart of Christ's mystical body—the Church whence came forth the life-blood of the Church's doctrine, government, and jurisdiction, and towards which all the Christian nations turned with obedience, confidence, and love. Peter, who was to represent Christ and be the Vicar and Viceroy of God on earth—whose faith was never to fail—Peter, who was to confirm his brethren, to feed the lambs and sheep, to hold the keys of the kingdom of heaven—he was crucified on the Janiculum, and on the neighbouring hill of the Vatican he found his grave and established his throne. Henceforth the Bishop of Rome is Peter's successor, inheritor of all his peculiar privileges and powers, receiving from Peter, by apostolical succession, all that Peter had received from Christ, and consequently the supreme ruler, the unerring and infallible guide, the point and centre of all authority and jurisdiction in the Church of God. But that which was destined to be the centre and safeguard of the religion of Christ was also, in the designs of God, to be the centre of the intellectual world. The Church, as a rule, naturally selected the greatest of her sons to fill in succession the Apostolic Chair. Hence the roll of the Popes is brilliant with the names of men, not only famous for sanctity and lore, but who attracted and drew to them all that was holiest and most learned in the world for ages.

They were the preservers and saviours of ancient literature and civilisation, the patrons and protectors of every high art, the friends and encouragers of science, and of its most ardent votaries, the protectors of the weak, the shield of the oppressed, the assertors of justice, the guardians of law, the apostles of peace, the powerful and dreaded enemies of tyranny and injustice. What wonder if all that was highest, best, noblest, purest, were attracted by them? What wonder that the greatest saints, the most eloquent orators, the grandest poets, painters, sculptors, historians, antiquarians, philosophers, astronomers, jurists, theologians should have loved in all ages to sit in the protecting shadow of the Pontifical throne?

Such was Rome in ages gone by. Such I believe it is destined to be, in spite of temporary vicissitudes, unto the end of time. And

such was the Rome which opened up before the wondering eyes of the young Irish student who now entered its gates.[1]

A lecture on the Pontificate of Pius IX. delivered at Yonkers, New York, on December 16, 1872, furnishes an interesting reminiscence of this time:

I saw in 1847, in Rome, a stalwart man—his hair was black as the raven's wing; his eye was bright, with the commingled beauty of the pure soul that shone through it, and the manly vigour of his form—for this man had been trained in his youth for a soldier—stately, kingly, more than kingly even in his physical appearance, he seemed a man every inch fit to be a ruler of his fellow-men; with a conformation indeed where God had seemed to set the seal and give the world assurance of a man. I saw him on that day, when my young eyes, fresh from the Green Isle, full of Irish faith and love, looked with a timid glance on the Vicar of Christ—on that day when he was surrounded by the plaudits of the Roman and Italian people.

Nicholas Burke seems to have derived from the example of this Pontiff, then in the zenith of his glory, that spirit of humility which was a specialty with him to the end:

I saw, as the shouts of their applause grew louder and filled the ambient air, that the object of that applause went down visibly deeper in the depths of his own personal nothingness and humility, humbling himself before God. Then was I reminded, looking upon him, of the words of the Royal Prophet of Israel: 'I swear that the more the Lord my God shall lift me up the more will I humble myself and will cast myself down before Him.' That humility came in order to preserve him; for if the man had built on the foundation of his splendid fame and the passing praises of the hour, he would have crumbled to ruin and his heart would have broken under the reverses that God sent him.

Then it was that the men who had been loudest in their hosannahs exclaimed, 'Crucify him!' 'Crucify him!'

Perugia was at this time the novitiate of the Irish province, which, since the Penal Laws, had not been completely reconstituted. Old in years and honours, Perugia was now, after

[1] Fr. Burke in the Church of the Conception, Dublin, Nov. 27, 1878.

a fevered career, reposing calmly in the embrace of the States of the Church. Hither Nicholas sped. His journey from Rome—nearly one hundred miles—was made beneath a blue Italian sky, through a country paved with mingled memories.

In Etruria the clangour of battle and the song of victory had long resounded. Here Tarquin was at last crushed; here Brutus sealed Rome's freedom with his blood. Along this route had raged the Veientine war, with its wearying length of strategy and slaughter; and our pilgrim, on asking to be shown the site of Veii—once greater and grander than Rome itself—was pointed out a pile of stones, around which sheep grazed and husbandmen tilled earth that once had been the remains of men. 'And is this,' he mused, 'all that remains of a city which withstood a siege longer than that of Troy, and along whose walls fifty thousand helmets shone? *Sic transit gloria mundi!*' Our traveller, though now twelve miles from Rome—the former subjugator of Veii—could distinctly see rising in the distance its victor-head untamed by time.

Following very much the course of the Tiber, he crossed it at the Bridge Felice, ascended glittering heights, passed through dark forests, viewed roaring cascades, and at last entered Spoleto, where the Papal troops later on gave battle to Victor Emanuel.

The route now lay through a district infested with brigands, and as the 'Mal di Posta,' guarded by Papal cavalry, rattled forth from Spoleto, Burke was not sorry to follow for some miles under its protection. He was thus unable to give more than a passing glance at the Temple of Clitumnus, immortalised by the Roman bards, and by Byron. But he was traversing the ground where Spoleto repulsed Hannibal, after the bloody battle of Thrasymene, and this in itself was a thought as full of warmth as the glass of cognac which the *vetturino* had just quaffed to nerve him for the road. No region could be better suited for the

designs of freebooters. Roads with sudden curves, and great defiles masked with dark foliage, afforded large facilities for ambuscade. No human form was to be seen unless an odd Papal soldier, peering from the guard-houses which dot the route; but the brigands in their deeds of blood and plunder too often eluded even Pontifical sentinels.

On, on he went, through perhaps the grandest panorama in the world. But it was that fair Umbrian valley of Assisium, the birthplace of Francis, the founder of Mendicant Friars, that roused the liveliest emotions in our pilgrim's breast. The order created by that Saint has always walked hand in hand with the Dominicans. Friends in life, Francis and Dominic left their friendship as a heritage to their children.

Passing the Tiber once more, he began the ascent of the mountains of Perugia, and soon entered the historic city of that name. After having traversed a maze of most narrow streets, he at last arrived at the old convent of St. Dominic, where Father Masetti, the Master of Novices, paternally received him.

Never shall I forget how, on my way to my novitiate in Italy, while yet a child, as I was crossing the hills of Perugia in the beautiful light of an Italian sunset, the thought frequently occurred to me—'I wonder will the person who is to teach me be like Brother Paul O'Connor? I wonder can I love him as I loved the gentle monk in Galway?' And when I was a while under the care of my novice master, I told him in Latin—'I think, sir, I can love you; I hope I will be good and do as you desire me, because you are like the man who taught me in Galway.' I could not then say Mr. O'Connor in Latin.[1]

Among the records of the old Dominican convent at Perugia, we find, under date 'Dec. 29, 1847,' an entry in Latin, of which the following is a translation:

After the usual preliminary examination before the Fathers, and

[1] Reply to the Galway address on Fr. Burke's return from America, published in the *Galway Vindicator*, March 19, 1873.

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with the advice and consent of the chapter, he received the religious habit in the choir, in the presence of the community, at half-past eleven o'clock in the forenoon, from the hands of the Very Rev. Fr. Master [in Theology] Thomas Rinaldi Prior, Provincial at Rome; and a probation of one year from that date was prescribed to him. It appears from the authentic letter of the Rev. Father Provincial of Ireland, that he was received for our convent of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Galway.[1]

The habit thus received consisted of two garments which Lacordaire had just compared to the white robe of innocence and the black mantle of penance. They seemed at first strange to Burke, but the wisdom of becoming early familiar with the dress is shown by his own admission when lecturing in New York on the 'History of Ireland:'

From the day I took this habit—from that day to this—I never felt at home in any other dress; and if I were to come before you this evening in black cloth, like a layman, and not like an Irish Dominican friar, I might, perhaps, break down in my lecture.

In many other ways he found throughout his after life daily confirmation of the truth of the word—'It is good for a man when he hath borne the yoke from his youth.'

Fr. Masetti, in the document he has been good enough to send us, states that Nicholas Burke on arrival, being ignorant of Italian, used the Latin, but very quickly learned the vernacular; that, a short time before, another Irishman who had received the religious habit was obliged by serious illness to divest himself of it, and Burke, full of charity for the invalid—who could not speak a word of Italian—ministered to him with such devotion that the sick man often reproached

[1] Father Burke never became an inmate of the West Convent at Galway. In explanation of the above passage, the Superior writes:

'West Convent, Galway: March 14, 1884.

'When a candidate seeks admission to our order, he is told to apply to the Prior of some one of our houses. When he does so, and is accepted by the Prior and community, he is registered on its book, and becomes a son of that house. Father Burke complied with that rule, was received, and made a son of the West Convent. He brought a testimonial with him to that effect to Rome.'

him with the injustice done to himself. 'His voice still rings in my ear, feebly enunciating, in the dead of night, "Nich-o-las."' In thus ministering to the sick, he imitated Francis of Assisi.

Perugia (said Fr. Burke) was a place that anything that is in a man, intellectual or otherwise, it was certain to bring out—even corns. I found there a novice who had nearly lost his life from illness contracted by going to bed with cold feet. To obviate this danger, I used to dance in my cell every night before going to rest.[1]

His cell not being floored, but tiled, no one's repose was disturbed by this agile performance. The monastery of Mount St. Bernard was not more cold than Perugia in the winter of 1847.

The special dread with which Italians regard consumption entailed irksome confinement and isolation. Thomas Burke, while discharging the *rôle* of nurse-tender, got leave to read one English book which he happened to have with him—a standard history of the French Revolution. This he read over and over again, till he knew most of it by heart.[2] Possibly the close study of one book may have laid the foundation of the logical conciseness which so enhanced the power of his eloquence. His unfailing flow of spirits, and wonderful charm of manner, which was to win so many souls to God, proved welcome elixirs to the prostrate sufferer.

Fr. Burke told his brother Dominicans that he had often to leave the sick man's chamber four times in the night, and go down to the kitchen to heat whey or broth. 'Many a time I returned,' he said, 'more asleep than awake, holding the key of the novitiate in my mouth, while in one hand might be a jug of steaming slop, and in the other a hot linseed poultice, or perhaps dressing for poor Behan's blister.'

It was a mark of confidence to entrust so young a neo-

[1] To Fr. Hickey, O.P.

[2] This identical book (Thiers' History) is still preserved with Fr. Burke's few effects, at Tallaght. He liked the book so much that some years before his death he bought a new edition of it.

phyte with the key of the novitiate house, through which only the infirmary could be reached. Behan, who was a native of Dublin, at last rose from his sick bed, but, after a brief rally, died.

The novitiate on which Br. Thomas had entered was a period of probation appointed to try by searching means how far a true call had moved him, and whether he possessed the needed qualities for living up to monastic rule. Until his profession, the novice is not bound to the order any more than the order is bound to retain, much less to profess, the novice, if his call should seem doubtful; and he incurs no blame for deserting the cloister under such circumstances.[1]

He had read of 'the monastic life' in the 'Imitation of Christ:' 'If thou wilt stand as thou oughtest and make progress, look upon thyself as a banished man, a stranger upon earth;' and, 'Here men are tried as gold in the furnace.' Fortifying himself with such thoughts, he bowed cheerfully to the rugged forms of his rule. The fine black hair which had whilom helped to make the *rôle* of Lady Anne a success was shorn off, leaving the tonsure to imply, as St. Thomas explains, that the brain should be free for contemplation. The fringe of hair which encircles the brow he styles 'the corona or priestly dignity;' the cleanly shorn cheeks and beard, the cutting away of all temporal concerns.[2] This 'corona' is also meant to typify the crown of thorns.

[1] Moreover, he is free to take with him any property he brought into it or might afterwards acquire. By a decree of the Council of Trent, a novice cannot renounce such property in favour of the order unless by special dispensation, but he may make a will to that effect, because wills are always revocable. Renunciation of his property would tend to shackle his free action in case he should afterwards wish to return to the world. The one year's probation is devoted to the study of the spiritual life, the rubrics, divine office, and the constitutions of the order. Humanities and rhetoric are usually studied before entering, according to present rule. After one year's novitiate a 'simple profession of vows' is made; but in Fr. Burke's time there was only solemn profession. At present this takes place at the end of three years. While a simple vow makes marriage unlawful, a solemn vow makes marriage invalid. Luther styles the novitiate 'the bed of the civil death of the novice, who expires to the world by profession;' but this hardly conveys an accurate idea of his position.

[2] Just as moralists tell us that in order to correct a vice one should practise the

He was leaving favourite pastimes and breaking fondest ties, but a whisper came that in his new calling he might yet find friends thick as summer leaves. 'No cross, no crown,' and the first must needs be braved. At midnight the novices rose to pray; matins said, they were permitted to retire, and all returned to their cells in profound silence and holy contemplation.[1] At 5 A.M. came Mass, meditation, and a study of their rule. Vespers and Lauds follow at due intervals; from 4 to 8 o'clock exercise is taken. The novices are not allowed to break silence unless during recreation. They are told to be Carthusians within and Apostles outside.[2] But as musical psalmody is part of the cloistered life, Thomas Burke was always happy when joining in its outburst, and with powerful effect it roused his zeal and re-awakened dormant memories.

Here the tired Crusader (he said), exhausted after his Eastern wars, would refresh his soul with holy song; and at the midnight hour would come the proud fierce baron to matins, and there hearken to the

opposite virtue; the tonsure tended to correct the absurd practice, which prevailed for centuries, of priests wearing perukes. In 1690 Jean Baptiste Thiers, Doctor in Theology, wrote a book to decry the wig—a work deemed so useful that it was translated into Italian, and reprinted in 1722 at Benevento. The abuse, however, was continued by the clergy, not only in France and Italy, but in England and Ireland. Arthur O'Leary and Dr. Gahan wore wigs; the last ecclesiastic who followed the fashion being Dr. Beatagh, V.G., of Dublin. His wig, a cumbersome and solid piece of head-gear, is still preserved as a sacred relic by the Presentation nuns. It is to be feared that the bobwig worn by priests in the last century too often excited a prejudice against them. A slang song, by Dr. Burrowes, describes in 1789 a capitally convicted culprit:

'Then in came the priest with his book;
He spoke him so smooth and so civil;
Larry tipped him a Kilmainham look,
And pitched his old wig to the Divel!'

The tonsure was angelically in advance of this vile custom. Fr. Burke recognised the wise arrangement, and pleasantly said that it was only a poor soil which required much top-dressing. Inasmuch as the Church prescribes that the head shall be uncovered during the Holy Sacrifice, any priest who wears a wig must obtain a dispensation before he can say Mass.

[1] On the Feast of St. Dominic, St. Saviour's, Dublin, 1877.

[2] Carthusians are presumed never to speak.

tender notes of the organ so skilfully touched, till in the very depths of his soul he would be moved to the humility of Christian sorrow and the heroism of Christian forgiveness.[1]

Many years after, when conducting a retreat for the clergy of Cork, he showed that by a resolute will the ecclesiastical spirit could subject itself to any discipline :—

When I first entered upon my novitiate, my naturally effervescent nature was greatly oppressed by the discipline of its rule, and I used to be put in penance for breaking silence at forbidden times—sometimes for whistling. Rising in the dark for matins, I made some remark on the weather to a French novice whom I had overtaken on the staircase. In reply he merely placed his forefinger across his lips. The solemnity of his responsive attitude touched me deeply, and this reproof from him did more good than all the penance it would have been possible for my superiors to impose. I never once broke the rule after.

In describing the same incident to Br. Joseph he said, 'That look went through me.'

These ebullitions were impelled by his love of 'friendship —that mysterious cement of the soul.' Our novice, even when hurrying to fulfil a pious exercise, did not like to go alone. We catch a glimpse of his nature in a sermon preached the year before his death. He described Jesus

taking with Him Peter and James and John that He might prove to us how truly He was man, and by that very craving for human friendship which is so natural to man. He turned to those three friends and said, 'Will you come and pray with me for an hour?'[2]

If Burke sometimes found himself in trouble, even for whistling, disciplinarians must remember that he was still a mere boy. The keen observer and philosophic thinker Blair notices the good which even this small indulgence brings, and describes 'the schoolboy whistling aloud to bear his courage up.' Fr. Burke to the end was a 'fine open boy,' to

[1] Sermon at St. Mary's, Sandymount, Sept. 8, 1859.
[2] Good Friday, 1882, St. Saviour's, Dublin.

adopt the words of his brother Dominican, the Bishop of Hamilton.

The stern hint of the graver novice set him thinking; and once more the words of à Kempis rang in his ear (Book I. c. xvii.): 'Know that thou art called to suffer and to labour, not to be idle and talkative.'.

Fasting has always held high rank as a great subjugator, and in the rule of St. Dominic it holds a front place.[1] At Perugia and at the Sabina Br. Burke was taught that the way to heaven was narrow and full of practical difficulties and practical hardships, and that any religion which professed to dispense with them was simply delusive, and gave the lie to God.[2] These considerations nerved him for the ordeal. As regards fasting, a novice is presumed not to eat meat from the beginning to the end of his course, but leave to relax the rule is granted in case of sickness. What thoughts helped to sustain Thomas Burke may be gleaned from his discourses. He would put before his hearers the image of the Saviour after forty days of prayer and fasting, weak and wasted—how the devil came, 'a strong-made form, and bore Him away in his arms, now to the Temple, then to Jerusalem; but at the close the Man who was spent and worn away with fasting crushed His enemy and drove the devil from Him.'[3]

For the *experimentum crucis* he braced himself by comparing it to the long novitiate of suffering through which the Church, in its first stages, had passed. For three hundred years it had undergone every misery to maintain the religion of Christ.[4]

His novice master, Fr. Masetti, states that, 'with the exception of some guileless ebullitions, he passed praise-

[1] Fasting includes abstinence from tobacco. To smoke would earn expulsion. Our novice, who was a smoker from childhood, found this not the least of the mortifications which he cheerfully embraced.

[2] St. Saviour's, Dublin, March 13, 1881. [Even by Dominicans, Fr. Burke was thought to be too rigid; but of this hereafter.]

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Lecture on 'Faith,' Kingstown, July 1869.

worthily through the novitiate, showing himself devout in practices of piety, attentive in choir, and in the services of the altar.'

'It is no small matter,' writes à Kempis (Book I. c. xvii.), 'to dwell in a monastery, and to live therein without reproof, and to persevere faithful till death.'

He had mastered so thoroughly the Italian language (proceeds Fr. Masetti), not only the phrases and idioms, but also the pronunciation, that he seemed born in Italy; so that he was able to deliver, one Sunday in Lent, according to the custom of the novices, a sermon in Italian in the refectory during supper.[1]

One of the distinguished band who formerly occupied San Clemente, Rome, in making reference to Burke's 'marvellous linguistic talents,' adds:

Twenty years afterwards I heard old Dominicans of the Minerva, Rome, speaking of the wonderful Fra Thomas Burke, who used to tell the 'Arabian Nights' in felicitous Latin to the novices and Fathers during their recreation hours in the gardens of Santa Maria della Quercia.[2] They remembered him as 'Questo maraviglioso giovane Irlandese' (this marvellous Irish youth).[3]

'I also puzzled them with two Italian versions of "The House that Jack Built"' (he tells Canon Burke), 'one grandly heroic *à la* Dante—"Behold the edifice Giovanni constructed" —the other in slang Italian.'

His linguistic progress was helped by the culture and tact of his elder sister Mary. She had been taught a grammatical knowledge of Italian, and corresponded with him in that tongue during the two years he remained at Perugia. Some of their letters are in French, of which, however, he failed to acquire the same command as of Italian.

[1] Letter of Fr. Pius Masetti to the Author. Fr. Masetti is now one of the Grand Penitentiaries or Extraordinary Confessors of the Church of St. Mary Major, Rome.

[2] The Novitiate for French Dominicans at Viterbo. Here Lacordaire received the habit.

[3] Letter of the Very Rev. G. D. Power to the Author, St. Louis, U.S.A., August 7, 1884.

He took other means besides story-telling to amuse his fellow novices:

> Among some recent arrivals (writes a Dominican) were several from Luconia in the Philippine Islands, where we have a mission. One day Burke yellowed his face, donned a fez, and addressed them in a gibberish with which he mingled words that he had picked up from their own talk. They were greatly puzzled, and at last said, when unable to answer or to penetrate him, that he must have come from one of the remote and hardly known islands of the Philippine cluster.

All this time—'the scholastic year,' as Fr. Masetti reminds us—he was studying and mastering the science of philosophy with a talent and zeal that earned the cordial praise of his preceptors.

The hour was now near when Thomas Burke should make his solemn profession, and with a firm step he advanced to the sacrifice. So stringent is the preparatory course for this scene, that had the novice interrupted it even by two hours—possibly by leaving the convent with the idea of joining another order—he must begin the year all over again from the date that he renewed his determination of becoming a Dominican. Entire personal liberty is essential to make the profession valid. Even a bishop cannot be professed unless by Papal dispensation, nor a married person except with nuptial consent, and a slave is wholly ineligible. On November 30, 1848, as the official record states, 'the usual Protestation was made to Br. Thomas Burke by the Prior.' The young religious was asked whether he acted by his own choice or under parental or other compulsion; whether he understood the nature of a vow, or was he in any way incapable of taking the obligation of the vows; was there any secret impediment such as disease; and lastly, whether he had been professed in any other religious order?

The sequel may be gathered from the records of the old 'Conventus S. Dominici de Perusio.'

Under date 'Die Quinta Januarii, 1849,' appears:

Br. Thomas Burke (we quote from the Latin), having completed the year of his probation, and having passed the examination in letters and morals with unanimous approval of the Fathers, and having been also received by the Chapter, the permission of the Master-General of the Order having been previously obtained, in conformity with recent decrees, made his solemn profession, in presence of the Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Vincent Rinaldi Prior, Provincial at Rome, on this fifth day of January, 1849, in the night choir,[1] in presence of the community; at this time the Most Rev. Fr. Master Vincent Ajello being General of the Order.

In testimony of the above, I, Brother Thomas Burke, have of my own free will made my profession, and here sign my hand.

And, as witnesses to his signature, a Father Hyacinth and a Fr. Franciscus append their names, while the official seal, and the words 'Ita est,' from the 'Novitior Magister,' give the document its final ratification.

Fr. Masetti s letter explains that the examination embraced the 'obligations, vows, and rules, as well as the rubrics of the order, and that Thomas Burke came with full votes to be approved for the solemn profession.'

This consists of a voluntary promise to be loyal to the institute of his choice, and to embrace its three vows. These bind to the observance of poverty, obedience, and chastity. St. Dominic regarded the institute as his bride, to whom he vowed to be faithful; their sons, spread over many lands, are the lineal fruit of that alliance. Thomas Burke made his vows the more readily because their substance had been already marked out by our Lord Himself. In taking that of poverty, he embraced it in an unusually large sense. 'Blessed are the poor in spirit' was one of the apothegms proclaimed on the Mount. Fr. Burke held that if poverty

[1] In our convents abroad there are usually two choirs, one in the church, the other in the house, but with windows *looking into* the church. In this latter Matins and Lauds are generally recited either in the night or in the early morn; hence the name Chorus Nocturnus, or Night Choir.—*Very Rev. J. T. Towers, Provincial of the Irish Dominicans, to the Author.*

meant privation—an emptiness, an absence and renunciation of some things—poverty of spirit then would mean a casting away of desires, affections, enjoyments, seeing that the spirit of man is of all these the centre. He felt that before he could put on the image of Christ he must cast away all fleshly impulse, and hence he cultivated as the beginning of the Christian character poverty of spirit, the first of the Eight Beatitudes.

He next received minor orders, by which he was made an acolyte, an exorcist, and a reader. Preaching on St. Patrick in 1881 he referred to his own personal mission as given by the various prelates who had laid their consecrating hands upon him, adding: 'The first hand that ever touched this unworthy head was that of the present Pontiff, Leo XIII.'[1] Monsignor Pecci was then Bishop of Perugia.

There is preserved in Holy Cross Convent a long letter from Thomas Burke giving an account of a *vacanza* or vacation which he spent at this time. Fr. Masetti, addressing the present writer, says: 'I brought him in October 1849 to Assisi, to the sanctuary of St. Francis, which gave him great pleasure, and left a lasting joyful remembrance.' It was in Assisi that the Order of Friars Mendicant had arisen.

Never did the world require a glimpse of Christ more than in the twelfth century (said Burke); for though in some respects it was a glorious age; though the Catholic Church was the one unquestioned sole authority in matters of Divine faith, and the one acknowledged representative of the revealed religion of Christianity; although sectaries in various forms had not yet appeared, nor other serious schism broken up the united Church, yet men's minds were beginning to forget the Christ, even in the sanctuary; with kindred sins simony and usury had found their way there; and the most strange form of heresy that, perhaps, ever sprang up in the Church of God appeared at that time. Peter of Waldo and the Poor Men of Lyons, who erred in faith as well as morality, yet who presented themselves

[1] Sermon in St. Saviour's, Dublin, St. Patrick's Day, 1881.

to the people under the form of men who had embraced abject poverty for the love of Christ, made their protest against the Catholic Church. . . . Francis of Assisi, a youth tinged with the harmless vices of the period and inflamed by the pursuit of military glory, whilst preparing to march against the Emperor Frederick, happened in Spoleto to spend a restless night. His sword and shield were there by his bedside, his armour was shining ready for the morning's march; but within him he heard a voice saying, 'For whom, Francis, are you going to fight? You are going to fight for a fellow-creature; but I am the Lord, your Creator and God—I ask you to come and fight for Me.' Francis sprang up agitated. He strove to put the thought out of his mind; it would not go. At last, throwing himself on his knees, he said, 'I am Thine; to Thee I consecrate my life.'

Francis found an ally in Dominic of Osman, and this study of the life of both strengthened Burke's zeal.

As our novice advanced through Assisi he observed traces of the great annual pilgrimage attended by thousands who throng to kiss the altar where Francis had first made his vows. In pressing forward many faint and fall, and on one pilgrimage years before ten persons were trampled to death. Indeed, it was meet that sacrifice should be made on ground which had been stained by Canaanitish sin.[1] Here the memory of Francis received all but divine honour; but, not without allowable pride, Burke remembered that the Order of Dominic had embraced fourteen canonised saints, three popes, one hundred cardinals, several patriarchs, two hundred archbishops, including an Archbishop of Canterbury, dozens of beatified men, and one thousand bishops, besides Masters of the Sacred Palace, whose office has been always filled by a friar preacher in succession to its first occupant, St. Dominic himself.

The Dominican system of government is so beautifully complete, that Washington in framing the American constitution borrowed it in its breadth. Priors, provincials, and even the

[1] It has been stated by Athenæus and Strabo that the Canaanites were the ancestors of the Etrurians, who in perpetuating the sin of that race produced eventual weakness of mind and body.

master-general, are all elected by votes, and their rule lasts but a few years. Though conservative in some respects, it is thoroughly representative and republican, and Thomas Burke, whose political sympathies had a dash of both, became very much charmed by it.

After solemn profession, three years are devoted to the study of philosophy, and four to theology.[1]

Letters and lore dignified Perugia. An atmosphere redolent of the flowers of culture was diffused. There the finest pictures in the world might be seen. Classic poems daily appeared from the pen of the brilliant Bishop of Perugia, now Pope Leo XIII. Learned professors became to Burke familiar objects in the streets, especially Vermiglioli, the great explorer of its wonderful and recently unearthed necropolis. Botanic gardens, fostered by the university, displayed their fragrant wealth. Friars in cowl and cassock, priests in their great hats, nuns on hallowed thoughts intent, traversed the city walls and castle terrace. Beneath, a grand range of country spread, embracing the valley of the Tiber and the distant Umbrian Apennines, while within the convent the old tastes of the Etrurians for arts and science flourished.

Among its hundred and twenty churches one had special interest for Thomas Burke. In that of San Domenico a great treasure reposed. The monument of Benedict XI., which represents him lying upon his bier beneath a Gothic canopy supported by angels, is pronounced a triumph of the revival in sculpture, and when our novice first heard the tradition that this great Dominican had been foully done to death after a reign of eight months, his impressionable heart was deeply moved. It is said that Philippe le Bel, incensed

[1] Polemic theology and Scriptural exegesis form part of the course, and canon law is studied at the same time as dogmatic theology. An examination takes place every three years for nine years after ordination; but it is made by new confessors only, and in moral theology only. There are several titles of distinction, such as Predicator-General, Bachelor, Lector or Licentiate, and Master in Theology, or 'D.D.,' all of which Fr. Burke had.—*Letter of Very Rev. P. Kenny, O.P., Prior, to the Author.*

by excommunications, sent an emissary, disguised as a lay sister, to present to the Holy Father, in the name of the Abbess, a basket of poisoned fruit.

Spots sacred to historic students were within easy access of Perugia. *A propos* of Trasymenes, where 15,000 Romans fell, Eustace speaks of a sound heard after sunset like the clashing of shields and the tramp of distant armies; and it was not without strange sensations that the impressionable novice, who, as he tells us, would rush nervously past a Galway graveyard, traversed the rank plain or crossed the stream which still retains the name of Sanguineto.

Just as one of the twelve disciples was the first to betray, the first blow struck against the Vicar of Christ was by Perugia, that ancient State of the Church. Suddenly its calm gave place to tempest, its culture to anarchy. Fr. Burke, when preaching a Lenten sermon more than thirty years after, made striking reference to this period of his life. Surrounded by hundreds of penitents, some hesitating at the very door of the confessional, he said, speaking of auricular disclosure:

> I recognise that it is difficult, and in all its fulness I actually sympathise with the man I see weeping with agony at the very thought of going to confession. I have seen in my experience a brave man stand upon a hill while a regiment of 1,100 soldiers were firing at that hill. I have seen him there as the bullets fell around him thick as snowflakes. That was in Italy; and brave as he was, he had not courage to go to confession. There are men who stare at death and expose themselves to danger, but they have not the courage to confess their sins.[1]

'These were times to try men's souls.' Pio Nono, as Burke tells us (99, *ante*), had himself been educated to be a soldier. SS. Francis and Ignatius had both been greatly dazzled by the pursuit of military glory. Burke's fidelity to his bride was now to be tried. 'I well remember how much excited I would be on hearing the drums beat under

[1] Sermon at St. Saviour's, Dublin, March 20, 1881.

the windows of my cell, but when I thought of the old woman in Galway the temptation passed away.'[1]

Trampling upon his passions (observes Fr. Burke), the man of love goes straight towards God; and, in that journey to God, he will allow nothing to hinder him. No matter what sacrifice that God calls upon him to make, he is ready to make it; for the principle of sacrifice is Divine love.[2]

During the political excitement of 1849, Burke is likely to have witnessed the destruction by the Perugians of the Citadella Paolina or fortress, begun in 1540 by Paolo III. and now converted into a pleasant promenade.

The revolt of Perugia proved a formidable assertion of its wayward will, and Pio Nono incurred some criticism for having caused a medal to be struck in commemoration of the generalship by which it was at last subdued.

The 'bullets falling thick as snowflakes' led us to ask the Prior of San Clemente[3] for some information on the point. 'This battle,' he writes, 'must have been on the occasion of the entry of the Austrians into Perugia in 1849.' Burke afterwards told Fr. Towers how favourably impressed he had been by the physique and good behaviour of these troops.

By some indulgence or accident 'Brother Thomas' seems to have been allowed to converse with the Austrian officers. The report by the *Irish American* of his lecture on 'The Exiles of Erin' mentions that he had formed the acquaintance of Field-Marshal Nugent, towards whom he had been attracted by his Irish descent.

Canon Brownlow's notes of circumstances mentioned to him by Fr. Burke himself may here be quoted:

During the revolution at Perugia, the Giunta sent people to take inventories of all the contents in the religious houses. Brother

[1] Fr. Burke to Arthur Moore, M.P. For this gentleman—the nephew of the present writer—Fr. Burke entertained a cordial friendship, as well as for his mother and sisters. In Rome their intercourse was particularly frequent.

[2] Lecture on 'The Irish People in Relation to Catholicity.'

[3] The Very Rev. Dr. O'Callaghan, now Coadjutor-Bishop of Cork.

Burke was in his cell when the agent came to note down its scanty furniture, and just as he began to jot down a few items, Brother Thomas indignantly stopped him, saying, 'Those things are mine.' The agent, with a sneering smile of mock politeness, replied, 'Ah, Signore, adesso siamo liberi.'[1] Whereupon the novice thundered out, 'If you don't get out of my room this instant, I'll send word over to the English consul, and complain of you for touching the property of an English subject.' The attitude of the tall Irish youth was so threatening that the Italian beat a hasty retreat. The brotherhood, hearing high words, were afraid the Irish brother's pugnacity would get the convent into a scrape, but Burke, in telling the story, added, 'I daren't for my life let that be known in Ireland, for they'd never forgive me for acknowledging myself to be a British subject.'

Fr. Burke, after his arrival at Woodchester, described the Grand Inquisitor chased round the halls of the convent; but he was so fond of a joke that it is hard to say how far the story may be true.

The excitement into which the Revolution threw the inmates of the convent (continues Canon Brownlow) impaired for a time all regularity in discipline. The father who taught theology spent the whole day on his knees before the Blessed Sacrament, some could settle to nothing, while Br. Thomas paced up and down the corridor with a long stick, which he held to his mouth, and manipulated like a trombone, making the strangest noises in accompaniment. The others would point to him sadly and shake their heads, evidently thinking that the tumult had turned his brain.

While at Perugia his master of novices often spoke of him to the Nuns of Blessed Columba, who lived and died in Perugia; and through him Fr. Burke became acquainted with them, as he was their confessor. The friendship thus begun continued to the end of Fr. Burke's life, and he frequently sent them assistance through the numerous friends whom he interested in their behalf, after they lost all their property in the Revolution of 1860.[2]

During the two years which he spent in Perugia (writes Fr. Masetti, also addressing the present writer) the religious as well as the master of novices were always content with his conduct. He was ever lively and joyous, and kept his companions cheerful with healthy conversation, jokes, and pleasant stories.

[1] 'Ah, sir, now we are free.'

[2] Letter of Very Rev. Canon Brownlow, M.A., Torquay, Oct. 21, 1884.

Throughout his after career as master of novices, prior, and preacher, Fr. Burke taught that a wide field for recreation lay open for the practical Christian, and that rational amusement was entirely compatible with the service of God and the observance of His law.

Peace having now reassumed her sway in Rome, though it was not until April that the Pope returned to it, we find Thomas Burke on January 3, 1850, leaving Perugia and becoming a theological student of the Minerva. A reign of terror had prevailed to an almost incredible extent, assassinations took place in the public streets; more than one Dominican fell dead in his habit; the dying were refused religious consolation, the chaplain-in-chief, Gavazzi, declaring that martyrdom sustained in defence of fatherland freed the soul from all stain. The stiletto which killed Rossi was borne with honours through the city; a society calling itself the Congega d'Inferno was established; physicians were threatened with death if they did not poison their patients; Lorenzo Agristi died from the effects of a sharp steel thrust up his nostrils, lacerating the arterial and venous vessels. 'Sometimes in sport,' records the *Fatti Atroci*, 'the assassins used to leave the priests half killed that they might die in greater torture.' The churches were filled with yells, blasphemies, and tobacco smoke, while the sacred ornaments and often the holy elements were flung about. 'One of the profaners took the Calendario and, laying it upon the altar, affected to read out of it some gibberish; some lit the candles; one of the mob intoned the "Te Deum," which the crowd roared after him; another preached from the pulpit a blasphemous sermon.' 'Even the pyxes and chalices were carried off, in obedience to a Government circular, as the property of the Republic.' Some of the soldiers greased their shoes with the consecrated oil; others drank wine out of the chalices, with ribald songs. In certain schools in Rome the children were taught to say *Dio maladetto* (accursed God). Arduini, an apostate priest, from

the stage of the Apollo Theatre, exhorted the mob to scoff at religion. Parodying a sermon, he took for his text, 'In principio erat Verbum,' which he blasphemously translated, 'In the beginning was chatter.'[1] This was probably the same priest who, Mr. Maguire in his work on Rome states, celebrated pontifically in St. Peter's, and from the great balcony blessed the multitude in papal fashion amidst the peal of bells and roar of cannon. He adds that the Sacrament was borne in mock procession, often trampled beneath the feet of harlots and galley slaves. Even the awful solemnity of the bed of death was outraged by impurities.' In the hospitals the ministrations of nuns were foully travestied. Pope Pius IX. addressing the prelates of Italy in his allocution of December 8, 1849, dated from Portici, writes: 'And even the miserable sick, struggling with death, deprived of all the aids of religion, were compelled to yield up their souls in the midst of the wanton solicitations of lewd harlots.'

These beings had been liberated from the prison of St. Michele, and afterwards paraded themselves through the blood-stained streets, lolling in carriages seized from the cardinals and other princes. At last France came to the rescue, and anarchy ceased to reign.[2]

Two years previously (says Fr. Burke) I heard Pius applauded to the skies by the people to whom he gave every privilege which the modern ideas of freedom claimed. I now saw him on his return from exile at Gaeta, and those few years seemed to have added half

[1] These are but a few items extracted from many too repulsive to be noticed, and enumerated in the *Fatti Atroci dello Spirito Demagogico* (Florence, 1853). The data are compiled from official records.

[2] It was regarded as a stigma on the French arms, that in their first attack on Rome they were finally repulsed by the insurgents, with a loss of five hundred men. Oudenot's explanation did not tend much to mend his blunder. While making the attack, he followed the guidance of an old map of Rome, whereon was marked a gate described as the Porta Pertusa, not far from the present Porta Angelica. When the hottest part of the struggle came it appeared that the so-called Porta Pertusa had been built up for two centuries. This fact escaped the vigilance of Mr. Maguire in his otherwise exhaustive account of that time.

a century to his life. The heart within him seemed broken; he was stooped and bent, and the silver of sorrow had already whitened his head. 'If this continues,' thought I, 'the man must die.' It has continued: trial has been added to trial, and cross to cross; but the man raised himself up in the power of God, and he has borne more than ever Pope did since St. Peter, and he has outlived the longest life of any save he.[1]

No sooner had the Pope been reinstated, than he pronounced a magnanimous sentence on his enemies:

Come back, you exiles in every foreign land; come back to your own blue sky and sunny soil; come back to the bosom of Italy. I am not so much your king as your father, and I will trust myself to the love, to the gratitude, and to the affection of my people.

This act (adds Fr. Burke) I witnessed. I saw the exiles return and bathe the hand of their liberator with grateful tears. I saw the eyes of the little children, whose fathers came back to them from out their dungeons, rejoicing under the smiles of the man whose hands unbarred those prison gates.[2]

In the great halls of the Minerva, where Thomas Aquinas had taught, Burke found a high incentive to go and do likewise. His residence here exercised a deep influence on his life. Loving allusions to that time are constantly made, large views were fostered, prized friendships formed. When he first entered it the stain of blood on the pavement had hardly dried. Not long before, as Fr. Towers reminds us, 'the *parocho* of the Minerva was called out from his dinner and immediately shot. French troops now held its halls.'

One day our novice surprised his master by saying that 'when reading the "Summa" one's faith was gone.' In explanation he said that in the 'Summa' mysteries ceased to exist, so vividly were the Divine scenes brought before him.[3] Burke subsequently said that after St. Thomas had been three hundred years in his grave, and when the Church

[1] Fr. Burke in Cork Cathedral, May 29, 1877.
[2] Pontificate of Pius IX., Yonkers, U.S., Dec. 16, 1872.
[3] Sermon on the Triduum, Sept. 12, 1869.

assembled at the Council of Trent, on the right of the Pontifical chair were the Holy Scriptures, and on the left the 'Summa,' being the only books admitted into the Council.

The 'Summa' continues to hold this high repute. One of the first Encyclicals issued by the present Pope[1] stated that in it the very ideal of all that was brightest, greatest, truest, and most glorious was to be found.

A mind fed on such aliment could not fail to thrive.

It would hardly become me (observes Judge O'Hagan) to speak of the theological attainments of Fr. Burke. But I may be permitted to relate what fell from his own lips. He was an ardent and zealous student of the great doctor of his order, his own patron St. Thomas; and to his familiarity with the pages of that unrivalled teacher may be attributed the ease, fulness, and accuracy with which the exposition of theological topics fell without effort from his lips. I heard him say that in his noviceship, so great was the delight with which he followed and meditated on the truths of faith in the magnificent exposition of St. Thomas, that he could not expect again to drink such joy until he found those truths realised face to face in the presence and vision of his Creator.

He drank these truths with the greater zest from the fact that the Angel of the Schools had had for his teacher in philosophy an Irishman.

The gems of thought which our inquirer found in the depths of the 'Summa' brought to him at times the glow of actual excitement. Once only Fr. Burke made public reference to this book. It was at Cork in a lecture on 'Catholicity and the Age we Live in.' Opening Milner's 'History of Latin Christianity,' he read aloud the following in reference to Thomas Aquinas: 'No man ever lived that investigated more fearlessly even the most awful questions than did this great saint. No atheist that ever was born went more fearlessly into the question of the existence of God, or threw out more terrible arguments against it, than St. Thomas.'

[1] On the Feast of St. Thomas of Aquin, 1881.

He was fearless (explains Fr. Burke) because his own soul rested upon the immutable truths of his religion and his faith. He knew nothing could interfere with them. No discovery or argument could upset them, and therefore he went out with a sense of utter security, and fearlessly pushed his inquiries into the gravest questions ever presented to the mind of man.

Fr. Burke went on to show that the Catholic Church was not afraid of scientific investigation.

Br. Thomas was now a member of the Holy Family of St. Dominic. Like an ardent scion who proudly gazes on the portraits of his ancestors in the great gallery of his home, Thomas Burke spent hours in the companionship of St. Vincent Ferrer, St. Peter of Verona, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Pius the Fifth, Blessed Albert the Great, and other illustrious fathers of his order. These names—the aristocracy of sanctity—inflamed his ambition, and did not make him less a man.

One day when Burke was taking a country walk with a priest—as we learn from a Dominican—they observed a man, stiletto in hand, crouching behind. There was something in the fellow's eye that meant mischief. Burke grappled with him and pinned him to the ground, until a *constabile* coming on the scene rid them of further danger.

An American journalist, from information supplied by one of Fr. Burke's associates, writes of his residence at the Minerva:[1] 'Here his aptitude for learning, his retentive

[1] As Maguire and Eustace furnish no details of the Minerva, the following account, kindly supplied by the Very Rev. P. V. Kenny, O.P., Prior, will be welcome: 'The principal church and convent of the Dominican Order in Rome is San Maria sopra Minerva, so called because built on the ruins of the ancient temple of Minerva, in the Campus Martius. A statue of Minerva armed with a lance has been lately discovered in the grounds of the cloister. The church was built after the design of a lay brother of the Order, and is one of the best specimens of Italian Gothic. Under the high altar, which was consecrated by the late Pope, reposes the body of St. Catherine of Siena. St. Antoninus, Archbishop of Florence, and some beatified members of the Order were priors of this convent. It consists of two large quadrangular cloisters of unequal size, the larger being the convent proper, the smaller being the residence of the general of the Order and his companions, and the Dominican Cardinal, at present Cardinal Zigliara. The Secretary of the Index also resides here. In the convent *proper* are two great libraries, the

memory, the poetry of his diction, and his felicity of illustration, astonished not only his fellows, but his superiors.'

It was about this time that a Jew violated the civil law by engaging a Christian servant. This girl privately got one of his children baptised. The ecclesiastical authorities, when the matter became bruited, took a year to examine the proofs, and decided that the Church must take charge of the child. It is interesting to know, on the authority of so great a thinker as Fr. Burke, that one of the most momentous events of modern times hinged on this seemingly trivial incident. 'I believe myself, being a witness of these facts and analysing them, that the case of that child was the beginning of the troubles that have issued to-day in the loss of the temporal dominions of the Pope, and in the bloody revolution.' This Fr. Burke said at New York on December 16, 1872. He recurs to the same time in a lecture delivered at Waterford:

When the Jewish child Mortara was relegated to the Catholic faith by being baptised, he became at once the special charge of the Pope, as the earthly head of that Church. Once baptised, Pius IX. could not give him up, and nobly did the grand old man discharge his trust. The fleets of England and France blocked up his ports whilst the demand was made upon him for the surrender of the child. Cabinets sent their envoys here and there, but the illustrious Pontiff, relying on the unchangeable word of his Divine Master, thoroughly conscious of his duty, was fully equal to the occasion. 'No,'

Conventual Library and the Cassanatansioni, so called from Cardinal Cassanata, who gave it to the Order. It is the second in Rome in the number of printed books and manuscripts—the latter embracing not less than 4,000. At present it is a *national* library. Three theologians and as many lay brothers of the Order attend it every day from nine till six P.M. to assist visitors and afford all information required. To be a 'Cassanatansian' theologian is one of the highest honours to which a Dominican can be raised in the Order. There are large halls for the Faculties of Theology and Philosophy, the convent having the privilege of granting degrees in Thomistic Philosophy and Theology. The Minerva was also historic as the arena wherein the meetings of the Holy Office had long been held. Here Galileo received that memorable sentence beginning, 'Whereas thou, Galileo,' and in the Minerva he abjured his condemned opinions. But since the Italian Government entered the Porta Pia this once formidable tribunal has become a sinecure. It may be added that the Records of the Inquisition were seized during the Revolution of 1849, and now repose in the library of Trinity College, Dublin.

replied he, 'no; you may imprison me, but that child can never be surrendered. *Non possumus*; it cannot be done.' The hand of that child Mortara I have shaken as he grew up to the priesthood, and I will never forget him.[1]

To compensate for pleasures relinquished, Thomas Burke indulged, so far as his rule allowed, a love of the liberal arts. 'While still a novice,' observes his late Provincial, 'he was surprised to receive one day a few pounds from home. He waited on his superior, and asked leave to buy a piano for the use of the novices during their hours of recreation. The request—then a very unusual one—was granted.'[2]

This happiness was now heightened by the thought—and the words are his own—that if his ear was charmed by music or his eye delighted by art, the Church must be recognised as their mother, in so far as to have brought them forth from the chaos that followed Pagan civilisation. His admiration of art was strengthened under the example of the great Dominicans who had gone before him, especially Angelico. It was a tradition in the Convent of Santa Sabina that this great master of the ethereal touch never laid his brush to the Saviour or the Madonna except on the day that he had received Holy Communion. The 'Crucifixion' he painted reverently on his knees. 'We read of him,' says Fr. Burke, 'that whilst he depicted the Divine sorrow in the Virgin Mother for the Saviour on the Cross, whilst he brought out the God-like tribulation of Him who suffered there—he was obliged to dash from his eyes the tears of love and of compassion which had produced the high inspiration of his genius.'

To the gifted Father Angelico he also refers in a passage, relevant to the present period. It occurs in a sermon on 'The Church the Mother of Inspiration and Art,' *à propos* of the completion of the fine Dominican church at New York:

It is fitting that, in a temple of my order, when I look upon

[1] Lecture at Waterford, February 3, 1875.

[2] Very Rev. B. Russell, O.P., to the Author, August 18, 1883.

yonder image of my Holy Father, in imagination and without an effort I travel back to the spot where I had the happiness to live my student's days, and where in the very cell in which I dwelt I beheld from Angelico's own hand a glorious specimen of his art. These are the gladness of our eyes, the joy of our hearts. They give us reason to rejoice with Him who said: 'I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth.' We rejoice because they are not only fair and beautiful in themselves, but are also the guarantee and the promise that the traditions of ecclesiastical painting, sculpture, architecture, and music in this new country will yet come out and rival all the glories of the nations that for centuries upheld the Cross. They are a cause of gladness to us, for when we have passed away our children and our children's children shall come here, and, in viewing these pictures, will learn to feel the love of Christ.

The grand pictures with which Italy abounds, illustrative of the various stages of the Passion, had no small effect in educating Burke's mind for the work of the pulpit.

Later on, when the rigours of his novitiate ended, and he returned to Rome a fully developed Dominican, he styled himself a polygamist in his devotion to the nine Muses, not excluding those of Rhetoric and Tragedy. How often have favoured friends heard him declaim the best of Shakspere's plays! But for Thalia, Muse of Comedy, he bore through life a passion quite undying. Even Terpsichore was not excluded; he more than once danced for the amusement of some genial brother, his habit imparting a fantastic effect to his personation of Cerrito in the Shadow Dance.

Fr. Burke's sermon on Cardinal Cullen describes Rome at this time. Though the men he names were now dead, monuments of their genius extended on every side, and served to educate our student's eye.

The museums of the Vatican were springing up and being filled. The greatest scholars of the day were at work in Rome: Mai rescuing from the palimpsests the precious and long-lost treasures of ancient Roman eloquence; Mezzofanti speaking all known languages, the wonder of the age; Few unlocking the treasure-house of archæo-

logy; Canova recalling the best days of Grecian sculpture; Francesco Cancellieri writing on all recondite and strange subjects; Conte and Calandrelli, astronomers who laid the foundations of the higher fame of Vico, and of the great Jesuit Secchi: in a word, a host of men illustrious in every walk of learning, science, and art, who seemed to have brought back again to Rome the glories of the Augustan era. Into this bright home of learning and sanctity (he adds) the Irish boy enters joyfully.

He was something of an æsthete, but an æsthete regulated by asceticism; he liked culture, but used it as tending to make brighter the path to heaven. A philosopher, but with a philosophy tempered by the discipline of religion; otherwise it 'might clip an angel's wings.' 'Perhaps,' he declared,

> The best that can be said of the highest intellectual culture is that it is a good immediate preparation for the development of the third and highest life of man—namely, the spiritual life. The philosophers of old knew the names of all the virtues, but they were unable to practise one. They taught the beauty of purity and chastity in man, but when it came to the trial of temptation the best among them has left behind him a name stained with unutterable crimes.[1]

Rome was now occupied by French troops. Their presence awakened stirring memories of past triumphs. Burke did not forget his mother's parting words; but a fatherly interest in *le petit tambour* involved no infringement of her injunction. How badly paid the French troops were, we learn from his 'Address to the Young Men of Brooklyn' (December 15, 1872), the word 'cents' being used to make the value of the coin clear to his audience:

> I remember once at a review of the French troops seeing a poor little drummer boy running up and down all day, beating his drum wherever he was sent, in order to call the troops together; and when he came in exhausted in the evening I said to him, 'Well, have you enjoyed yourself to-day?' '*Eh! ma foi!*' answered he, 'it was a hard day for two sous.' After he had paid for his clothing and victuals, he had just two cents coming to him.

[1] Sermon at Westland Row, Dublin, December 2, 1876.

For reasons which will soon appear, our novice was removed from the Minerva to that venerable structure on the Aventine Hill known as Santa Sabina. This old convent by the Tiber had been once occupied by St. Dominic himself. His cell remains very much as he left it six hundred years ago, and the hall still stands where he gave the habit to St. Hyacinth. Burke on entering Santa Sabina was struck by an old fresco over the great door depicting Dominic returning hither at night, and escorted by angels; but a still more curious relic was found in the stone, still shown, and which tradition states had been cast by Satan at the saint after having overcome a temptation.

'Santa Sabina,' says Fr. Burke, 'covers the spot where lived Marcellus, the first to introduce monastic life into the Western Church. Here St. Jerome preached conferences to her virgins, and on the site thus endeared Dominic founded the novitiate of his order.' 'Santa Sabina was remarkable for its strict primitive observance of our rules and constitutions,' writes an esteemed correspondent.

The year Fr. Burke was sent from the Minerva to Santa Sabina was the same year that our province in England was re-established, and the General appointed Fr. Burke, whilst not even a sub-deacon, to be its first Master of Novices. And that he might be able to introduce strict observance into England, the General wished him to spend some time at Santa Sabina before his departure. Here is the simple explanation, which I often heard from Fr. Tom himself.[1]

Br. Burke placed himself unreservedly in Fr. Jandel's hands, to be regulated just as the Master-General pleased.

The fruit which grew from his thoughts at Santa Sabina we find him long after casting among the ardent souls who thirst-

[1] Rev. P. V. Kenny, O.P., to the Author, St. Saviour's, October 5, 1884. He adds: 'S. Sabina does not belong to the Roman Province of the Order, and is not subject, as the Minerva is, to the Roman Provincial. It is directly under the control of the Dominican General. In many of the provinces of the Order the General, for special reasons, reserves to himself the immediate jurisdiction over one or two houses of men or women. In the Irish Province, Siena Convent, in Drogheda, is subject immediately to the General, who has appointed as his commissary or visitor over the convent Fr. Conway, late of Tallaght.'

ingly followed him in his retreats. At no time did he appear in greater strength than when conducting these exercises for ladies at Loretto. Among the notes kindly sent for our use by Miss Rowe—the convert daughter of a Devonshire rector —we find: 'Think of St. Dominic and St. Francis meeting at Santa Sabina at sunset; how they had not got through their meditation on the wondrous mysteries of the incarnation before the sun rose over the Alban Hills.'

What were the points which so prepossessed Jandel in favour of this Irish youth? Among various accounts of his progress at Santa Sabina we heard one which struck us as harmonising with his own account of the youthful St. Lawrence O'Toole. The words, though warm, may perhaps be borrowed to paint his higher characteristics:

> They knew what was demanded of the monk and the consecrated priest, they knew by the experience of years how complete the sacrifice of the heart must be. But the presence of the youth among them as he came forth in his monastic habit, with his eyes cast to the ground, and his face radiating with the love of God, came like rays from the brightness of heaven; they saw in that youth, kneeling hour after hour before the presence of God upon the altar, they heard in that voice ringing clear and high in the tones of praise above the chorus of voices of those who praised the Lord, as if an angel were in them, striving to uplift his spirit totally upon the wings of song.

It would have been impossible for the aspirant to Christian perfection to find a retreat more redolent of sanctity, or one which inclosed higher types of asceticism. A man eminently deserving of beatification was Père Besson, Prior of Santa Sabina. Br. Thomas having chosen him as his confessor, frequent visits to Besson's room became necessary. It had been often observed that Besson evinced a special objection to any person entering his inner cell; but Burke, with the curiosity of youth, watched his opportunity to peep in unobserved. He entered with a tripping air, which immediately gave place to a shock very unusual with him. Bluebeard's wife, when she opened the secret chamber, was not more

appalled by what she saw. The room contained no furniture beyond one stool, a table, and a black coffin with gaping jaws, while the white walls around bore daubs of human blood. It afterwards transpired that Père Besson slept in this coffin, from which at two o'clock A.M. he rose for matins. He regularly used the discipline or scourge, and with a degree of severity that may be inferred from the state of the walls. Perhaps he thought of the blood of the lamb, which led God to spare such doors as were marked by it. Fr. Besson—on this occasion responding to a summons—had left his penitent in an outer room, but promising to return to hear his confession. 'Never,' said Fr. Burke, as he told the incident to his novices, 'never did I make so complete an act of contrition as I did then.' As an artist, though not equal to Angelico, Besson yet possessed talents of a high order, and painted some frescoes in the chapter-room of St. Sixtus at Rome. Thomas Burke was much struck by this man—one indeed so remarkable that lives of him have been written not only by Dominicans, but by Protestants; and the same remark applies to his colleague, Lacordaire. Br. Thomas watched Besson at all seasons; to the last hour of his life Besson was vividly present to his mind, and his example nerved him through the many trials of a chequered course. Fr. Burke, when preaching one of his Lenten sermons at St. Saviour's, Dublin, reminded his 'dearly beloved brethren and fellow-sinners' that many a man goes forth to his daily occupation and lies down at night without offering throughout the whole day one prayer; or at most, the mere thoughtless recital of a set form of words.

But (he added) where is the soul, where is the spirit crushed before God, where is the man knowing his own infirmities, remembering his own past sins and bewailing them in a spirit of contrition, who with temptation around him still clings to God? Do *you* ever pray in this fashion? Let every man look into his own conscience. Do you know how to pray? I scarcely know how to pray, and I have been at it five-and-thirty years as the profession of my life. Listen to me.

I remember seeing a priest kneeling before a crucifix in the oratory of a convent in Italy on a Good Friday morning, and he did not know I was watching him until he ceased to pray; he was praying there before a lifelike image of the Crucifixion—our Lord bleeding from the cross. His mind, his heart and soul went into that crucifixion. For three hours he realised every agony, every pain and pang of the soul and body of the crucified Lord; but he was not able to speak, and I saw him rise up from his prayer, his eyes fixed in a glassy stare upon that cross, and he threw himself about the foot of it, and fell in a swoon as if he would die. I fled terrified, for I was a youth at the time, and I left the man there whose prayers had crushed him. Ah, how little do we know how to pray! It is the first and most necessary duty amongst us, and if any man here expects to enter heaven he must open the way by prayer. In the name of God, take up this practice. Throw yourselves, like men, heart and soul into it, put before Him your wants and necessities, for He who is your Father, who knows your soul so well, is only waiting to hear that prayer in order to grant that which is so necessary for us.[1]

It was at this period that Thomas Burke first became familiar with a disciplinary practice which is uniformly veiled from the sight of the world. But his Discourses often make reference to it. Thus on St. Patrick's Day, 1881, he speaks of a servant of God 'scourging his virginal flesh until the blood flowed down on every side—lacerated from head to foot by the unsparing hand of this awful disciplinary penance.'[2]

Burke's own cell was little better than Fr. Besson's. He entered it, in the first instance, unchilled by the words of Lacordaire, who styles it a tomb which the religious inhabits during his mortal life only to pass to the tomb that precedes immortality. Even then he is not separated from his brethren, but is laid to rest wrapped in his habit; and it is part of the Dominican rule to regard the habit as their coffin.

Besson, Jandel, and Lacordaire had made their studies together, and traversed Italy with knapsacks on their backs.

[1] Lenten Sermon at St. Saviour's, Dublin, March 20, 1881.
[2] *Ibid.* March 17, 1881.

When Lacordaire, however, compares the cell to a tomb, it must not be taken quite literally. The phrase would apply more to a monk than a friar, and though many Catholics regard them as synonymous, they are wholly different. The monk is a solitary; the mission of the friar or brother is to go among the people, advising and consoling them.

That winding path down the Aventine Hill which St. Dominic had daily travelled on charitable thoughts intent soon became as familiar to Burke as the staircase in his mother's house.

An old orange tree planted in the garden of Santa Sabina by Dominic's own hand, after having dispensed for six centuries its refreshing fruit to the pilgrim or student, had at last given symptoms of decay, when suddenly it sent forth a strong new sucker teeming with blossoms, which grew into golden fruit. This the General seemed to regard as earnest of renovated strength in the Order; and Fr. Burke, some years later, brought home to Ireland as a souvenir one of the oranges. He gave it to a member of the author's family, who still preserves the shrivelled relic.

Thanks to the legislation of the Italian Government (writes Fr. Towers, O.P.), if you visit Santa Sabina at the present day, memory will have to re-people its empty cells with the holy generations that once occupied them; but when the young Irish novice went there a numerous community, by their strict observance of rule, showed themselves to be true children of St. Dominic.

It was his good fortune to form the acquaintance at this time of a great priest who afterwards did much to make history and influence men. A Galwegian writing in the *New York Sun* tells us that Cardinal Wiseman formed a warm affection for young Burke, whom he met on one of his many visits to Rome. He was particularly captivated by the merry spirit of jest and Irish fun which played incessantly around a nature as open, artless, and sincere as a

child's. 'That young man,' he often said, 'has a wondrous power of inspiring love. He will be a great priest yet.' The Galwegian adds that it was chiefly from the opinion of his power thus early expressed that Fr. Burke was afterwards selected to preach the Lenten sermons which Dr. Wiseman himself, when head of the English College at Rome, made celebrated, and which at once, by a bound, brought him into a world-wide fame.

Some apt words used by Dr. Wiseman were afterwards quoted by Fr. Burke as thoroughly harmonising with his own impressions of Rome:

The life of the student in Rome should be one of unblended enjoyment. If he loves his work—if he throws himself conscientiously into it—it is sweetened to him as it can be nowhere else. His very relaxations become subsidiary to it. His daily walks may be through the field of art—his resting-place in some seat of the Muses—his wanderings along the stream of time, bordered by precious monuments. The student at Rome so peoples his thoughts with persons and things seen and heard, that his studies are, or ought to be, turgid with the germs of life, rich as the tree in early spring, in the assurance of bloom and fruit. On the darkest page of abstruse theology there will shine a bright ray from an object perhaps just discovered; but on the lighter one of history and practical doctrine there literally sparkle beams of every hue. The whole of Christian life and history—legible still, even to the traditional portraiture of apostles, martyrs, and their Head, traced from catacomb to basilica and cloister, make the history of the Church, her dogmas, practices, and vicissitudes, as vivid to the eye as any modern illustrated book can make a record of the past. But it is written, 'Rejoice therefore, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart be in that which is good in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thy eyes: and know that for all these God will bring thee into judgment' (Eccles. xi. 9).

The eye is not filled with seeing, nor the ear with hearing, even when the sights and sounds are those of Christian Rome (continues Fr. Burke). The young student of theology knew that his first duty lay directly to God, and that there are some things far better than knowledge, even when that knowledge is of things Divine.

The retirement and peace of Roman life, so sweetened by study,

so sanctified by contemplation and prayer, so enlivened by the highest and grandest functions and ceremonial of the Church, so pleasant in its learned and holy associations, were now to be exchanged for another life, more laborous still.[1]

In the holy company at Santa Sabina, Burke, in the natural order of religious life, would have spent some years (writes Fr. Towers), but his sojourn was suddenly interrupted, as the General called him elsewhere to fill an arduous and responsible position. The old Orders in England, except the Benedictines, never recovered the blow they received at the Reformation, and so recently as 1850 there were no Carmelites, no Augustinians, only two or three Franciscans, whilst the Dominicans had only one convent.

The time had now come when the friars-preachers of England were to be reorganised.

Candidates for the Order presented themselves in fair numbers (continues Fr. Towers), and, that they might be trained thoroughly in religious discipline, the young Irish student was taken from his studies and sent as Novice Master to Woodchester, when he had barely attained his twenty-first year.

The Master-General who took this bold course was the Père Jandel, and his resolve to make Burke an important instrument in the work was not suddenly formed. But before we enter on this new era, not in his life only, but in that of the now flourishing Dominican province of England, a retrospect and preamble become necessary to make both thoroughly understood.

[1] 'Ordo' &c. for 1879, *vide* p. 270 *et seq.*

CHAPTER IV.

MASTER OF NOVICES AT WOODCHESTER.

THE Dominicans possessed at the Reformation fifty-four priories in England and Wales. In 1538 persecution drove them into exile, and the province became utterly disorganised. A few stealthily remained, sufficient to keep its smouldering embers alive, and no more. Fr. Blagrave was the first who suffered death. Edward Byng, a Cromwellian officer and afterwards a chief of the Body-guard of Charles II., was one of those who, becoming a Catholic, made his profession as a Dominican, officiated in London, and suffered for the faith. Fr. Molineux, grandson of one of Queen Elizabeth's generals in Ireland, is found labouring on the English mission in 1664. The archives of the Master-General at Rome contain full record of the Fathers who, throughout the long dark night of persecution, kept the flame of religion burning. Some are described as baronets, as Graham and Martin; one is Raymond Greene, attached to the Royal Household at Windsor and St. James's; he was sent to Oxford by the Dean and Chapter of Windsor to read for the Church of England, but he embraced instead the Dominican rule, and under his mother's name, Westby, did duty as a zealous priest in London. The first English Dominican of whom we have clear tradition is Fr. Norton, 'who sharpened his razor on the knee of his leather breeches,' and eked out subsistence by selling pints of gooseberries from his garden at Hinckley. Here he built a little chapel in 1767.[1]

[1] One day, when Dr. Ambrose Woods, a distinguished theological writer and Dominican Ruler, called, he found Fr. Norton washing cabbage with his own

Fr. Norton had also been a Protestant. His unobtrusive life concealed virtues and gifts worthy of a Fénélon. At Louvain he proved his power, filled a chair, became D.D., and finally its rector; while his writings won prizes from learned societies. It should be mentioned that after the Dominican heroes of England had fallen during the tornado of persecution, their head-quarters and novitiate continued for two centuries at Bornhem, in Holland. This house had been founded by Cardinal Howard, O.P., brother of the Duke of Norfolk. One day Fr. Norton received his appointment as Prior of Bornhem. No man is a hero to his valet; and the old woman who acted as his servant said—while Hinckley tendered its congratulations—'If they knew as much about you as I do, they'd never make you Prior of Bornhem.'

Returning to England, he served Leicester from 1783 to August 1785. One day a local trader waited upon the mayor, saying, after he had very carefully closed the door, 'I know where there is a priest.'

'This is an important business,' replied the mayor. 'Come to me to-morrow, when there will be a full bench.'

Meanwhile the mayor, who respected Norton's gifts and worth, privately sent him word to fly. Fr. Norton's old leather small-clothes were soon in rapid motion, and ere next day's sun had set they might be seen with their owner speeding towards Douay. Meanwhile it appeared that the informer was heavily in debt and trying to get clear of his creditors; and the mayor not only foiled his scheme, but had influence enough to lodge him in gaol as a defaulting debtor.

The French Revolution drove the English Dominicans out of Bornhem. Fr. Norton founded a mission at Coventry,

hand. The good man bade him welcome, and hewed a large piece of fat bacon from the flitch. During dinner the guest plied his knife and fork, but merely feigning to eat; and while Fr. Norton left the room for something to drink, the guest adroitly put upon his host's plate the slices to which he himself had been helped.

and returned to Hinckley, where he died in 1800, bequeathing his bones to the bit of Leicestershire soil that sheltered him and had grown the fruits on which he had vegetated. Few visitors to Aston-Flamville churchyard are allowed to leave it until the sexton shows them Friar Norton's tomb.

The connivance extended by Leicester to the proscribed Dominican led Fr. Ambrose Woods, O.P., to open a secular school and small novitiate at Hinckley, and to build a chapel, which was licensed for public worship in 1825. One of his colleagues was Fr. Brittain, a convert. At Hinckley the priest who, as 'Fr. Augustine,' will be found filling an important *rôle* later on, made his studies. This novitiate did not even make its sons wear the habit; and Hinckley was no doubt quite unsuited as a foundation. The army of friars-preachers assigned to each country is called 'the Province.' The reconstruction of the English Province, with strict primitive observance, had long been the day-dream of Fr. Augustine's thoughts; and a voice whispered in his ear that he was the man to do it. England possessed a few Dominican Fathers, hardly recognisable as such, and officiating ostensibly as parish priests. The shoulders that they were urged to put to the wheel they shrugged. It was a habit they learned in France before the Reign of Terror drove them to England. They preferred the frying-pan to the fire. During the penal laws it was not unusual for the General, in memory of past triumphs, to give to some Italian the purely honorary title of Provincial of England. This empty rank at last died out, but, thanks to Holland, the English Province, though often laid waste, was never extinguished.

Fr. Augustine, while Regent of Bornhem, effected the sale of all the property in Flanders. Twice he became Provincial, and from 1832 to 1850 was pastor of Hinckley. 'In the latter year the number of Fathers was so reduced as again to threaten extinction,' writes their present Provincial, Fr.

Williams. Fr. Augustine, nothing daunted, continued to urge energy on his colleagues. At their final meeting at Hinckley four Fathers threw themselves on their knees, and resolved that if any feasible opportunity presented itself they would labour to reconstruct the long-disorganised English Province.

Next day a stranger, as he descended from the stage-coach at Hinckley, was observed making inquiries for Fr. Augustine. This was Mr. Leigh, an eminent English convert, who came to offer him the handsome Gothic church he had built at Woodchester.

But though the shackles of penal pressure had been partly unlocked, ugly marks remained behind, and the cold of the iron had entered their souls. The news seemed, indeed, too good to be true ; the Fathers rather shrank from the generous boldness of the proposal. Mr. Leigh asked leave to retire to the chapel while they renewed their deliberations. Here his orisons gathered increased fervour, and he returned to find all difficulties smoothed. The Fathers had decided upon accepting his proposal and sending a contingent of not less than three to Woodchester.

Woodchester Park had long been the home of the Moretons, ancestors of Lord Ducie. Every man on the property tells wonderful stories of their orgies through successive generations, and which ended at last in an incident akin to that of 'Lord Lyttelton and the ghost.' Nor are these stories confined to the people. In the Halliwell family—long the neighbours and attached friends of the Duciés—it is told how a figure in white, supposed to imply the Dominican intruder, scared the late peer, probably in a dream, during his last nights in the park. In June 1840, Lord Ducie filled his house with guests, as if trying to forget in their society the unpleasantnesses that had long tormented him. But just as he was conducting a lady into dinner, he stood aghast to see his father's spirit in the very chair that he as host was about to occupy. Hurrying from the room, Lord Ducie

repaired to London, and returned to Woodchester Park no more.

This is told from Stroud to Stone, and how six parsons tried to lay the ghost. At last Mr. William Leigh, a D.L. for the counties of Stafford and Lancaster, bought the property. He placed, as caretaker in the house, 'a bailiff who feared not God, man, or devil.' One morning very early, this man presented himself to his employer vowing that not all the gold in Gloucester would tempt him to pass another night in that house. Mr. Leigh pulled down the historic house, with its secret chambers behind the arras, and raised the beautiful new church in which the Dominicans have long worked such good. Woodchester Park, a place not inferior in picturesque grandeur to Studley Royal, and whose island in the ornamental water and tower overlooking it were added on the suggestion of George IV., had been old Church property; and Mr. Leigh felt that in building a temple to God's honour he had condoned past sacrilege and freed the place from ban. In point of fact, however, all interdict had been removed by the accession of Queen Mary. Mr. Leigh also built a church in Australia. At his death, in 1873, he left unfinished on the site of the haunted house a castle worthy of royal occupation, but which his son seems determined never to complete. This forsaken structure, roofed certainly, but in other respects a skeleton, through which the night wind piteously howls, is not calculated to dispel the popular superstition attaching to the spot.

The Dominicans stopped for the first night of their arrival at Mr. Leigh's house, near Nymphsfield. The good Fathers, on getting into a cab next morning at seven, and telling the driver where to go, heard him mutter, 'A strange hour, surely, to go to church.'

Fr. Augustine took possession of Woodchester Church on October 8, 1850, and full of zeal at once proceeded to organise the convent and novitiate. He became Novice-Master, Vicar-

Procurator, and Parochus; Fr. Dominic Aylward not having been installed as first Prior of Woodchester until July 6, 1854. Fr. Augustine seemed well qualified to direct the studies, having been himself Regent of Bornhem College; but how much he disappointed expectations the sequel will show.

The old house in which primitive monastic observance was to be revived clung to the side of a steep hill not far from the site of the present beautiful church and priory.

The spot chosen for the novitiate house was inhospitable in the extreme (writes Fr. Paul Stapelton, O.P.) Nothing but utter poverty stared everyone in the face, and the stolid, wan, nay austere figure of the vicar only added to the terrors of the necessary hardships.

Fr. Augustine—the priest just referred to—with the strongest zeal to carry out the rule of St. Dominic in strict integrity, was yet ignorant of the traditions and practices of the Order. This is not surprising when we remember that his career from 1825 had been mainly that of a secular priest in England.

Few Dominicans who made their novitiate or even served as priests under Fr. Augustine can look back without a chill to that period of their lives. Giving too literal an interpretation to the Constitutions in some instances, and deducing an utterly wrong meaning in others, he exacted from the religious, already bound by solemn vows of obedience, an observance of rigours never contemplated by St. Dominic, and which would have made Thomas Aquinas smile. But Fr. Augustine had little in common with the Angel of the Schools unless a lively faith and an indomitable strength of purpose. Fasts came first, and Fr. Augustine found a luxury in their undue severity. The Dominican Lent lasts for seven months, during which time only four ounces of dry bread are allowed for the morning collation—breakfast it cannot be called. This, however, is strictly according to the Constitutions. A good dinner is allowed; but how did Fr. Augustine supply it? Meat under no circumstances was permitted within the

walls during this time. He laid in a stock of salt herrings, which he purchased by the cask.

Week after week, and month after month, came the same monotonous *menu*. At last a keg containing mullets, which the vicar probably got cheap, was opened, and immediately sent forth an odour by no means inviting. The good vicar is said to have been deficient in smell and taste, which will account for his mistake—and he was influenced by a laudable desire to expend with economy the small funds at his disposal. It was not until after the arrival of Br. Thomas that Fr. Augustine became alive to the truth. The keg, ere half consumed, received funeral honours in the garden.[1]

On the Feast of St. Dominic during the year of Fr. Burke's arrival, as is well remembered by the novices, their dinner consisted of a red herring and cold apple-pie. This day is kept universally in the Order as one of exceptional festivity.

In August 1851, the Master-General Jandel arrived from Rome to make an inspection of Woodchester Convent. 'This is all very well,' he said, 'but you're not living according to the spirit of St. Dominic. I will send you a young man from Santa Sabina who is thoroughly competent to expound the Constitutions.'

There is much more to be told on this point; but meanwhile we must return to Br. Thomas, who is seeing after what he called his 'duds,' preparatory to starting for 'Merrie England.' 'They rigged him out in second-hand clothes from the "Ghetto,"' Canon Brownlow writes, 'so that he looked more like a smuggler than a friar.' This is the general belief among the friends of Fr. Burke, one which he himself did not discourage. In point of fact, however, the clothes were his own—the same suit which was worn by the lank youth five years before when leaving the field of Irish famine.

[1] Fr. Augustine's resolute asceticism in electing to live in this style—if it involved some mistakes—preached a good moral lesson. 'When at Hinckley he lived like a prince; he kept a splendid table—no doubt in compliment to the sons of the Catholic aristocracy who resided with him as pupils.'

This is known to all the Fathers who were then his novices By no means harmonising with the outgrown attire was a long Roman hat, like a capsized canoe, which the Père Jandel urged him to wear. But observing some tittering at his expense, Fr. Burke relinquished at Paris the Roman hat, and, 'because it was the cheapest, bought a jockey cap!'

The money placed in his hands to reach Woodchester had been calculated by the Procurator on rigid rules of economy, and soon ran short. When Burke landed at London Bridge he had not enough to pay for a cab. Dazed by the noise and glare of the great city, the timid youth hardly ventured to ask his way. When he got into the Poultry he felt more at home; but Cheapside disappointed a man who thought to get his dinner for sixpence. Amen Corner and St. Paul's nerved him somewhat for the road, until steep Holborn Hill—there was no Viaduct then—again tried his strength. He thought, however, of the old Dominican house at Holborn, in which Thomas Aquinas assisted at the general chapter;[1] and the youth's step became firmer when he remembered that the ground had been trodden by that angelic man. By the time, however, that he reached Paddington he was, as he said, more dead than alive.

It was nightfall when he entered the terminus of the Great Western Railway. He had not a farthing left, and his stomach was as empty as his purse. Thinking that he was now within measurable distance of his destination, he asked the porter if he knew a place called 'Woodchester;' but Tierra del Fuego would have been quite as familiar. At last he learned that it was much farther down than Reading, or even Cheltenham; and when he thought how much it would cost to reach it his face fell. The clock tower now tolled midnight, and it sounded like his knell. 'The youth was so crushed and humble,' Fr. Pius Cavanagh, O.P., states, 'that he

[1] This old house—now an Inn of Court for law students—still possesses, amidst the din of a great city, its peaceful aspect.

accosted the porter with the same deference in which he would have spoken to his superior. He told the porter exactly how he was situated, and the circumstances which had brought him to England.' The only part of the station in which there was a fire was the lamp room, and here they let him sit.

He told me (writes Canon Brownlow) that when sitting cold and hungry at Paddington Station, and thinking of Rome and the brothers and Convent he had left there, then it was that the porter thrust a hunch of bread with a bit of herring under his nose, saying, 'Here, poor devil, eat that!' The coarse way in which he did his act of charity grated very harshly on the sensitive youth fresh from the politeness of Italy, and he burst into tears.

Nevertheless he felt grateful to this porter; and years after, when he had become the great Fr. Burke, he visited Paddington Station, and, assisted by Fr. Pius Cavanagh, searched every part of it with a crown piece in his hand to bestow on the man who had erst befriended him.

Nestling in a corner of the lamp room, the weary traveller at last sank to sleep—possibly dreaming of 'Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp'—which he had loved to recite in Italian to the novices at Santa Sabina. But a shrill railway whistle disturbed 'the Arabian Nights' Entertainment,' and roused him to a deeper sense of his painful position. What was he to do?

At last (says Fr. Austin Maltus) he bethought him of one of the priests of the Oratory, which then stood, not at Brompton as now, but in King William Street, Charing Cross. He had known this Father at Rome, and had been of some use to him. Luckily the Oratorian was at home. He recognised Br. Thomas not without difficulty, owing to the strange dress he wore, and extricated him from his trouble by timely help.

There was no rail from Stonehouse to Woodchester then, and those only who made the journey forty years ago can realise the difficulties which beset it. The journey termi-

nated by an ascent, which seemed to our footsore and benighted traveller like that of the Great St. Bernard. He probably took the wrong turn and crossed the hill by a tortuous path.

'When I got to the convent the Prior had retired to rest, and they took me for a robber.[1] It was not until I sonorously said, "Nay, I am Brother Thomas from Rome," that the bolt was withdrawn which launched me into my new duties.'

The date of his arrival was October 4, 1851, the feast of St. Francis. Br. Thomas cut a strange figure. With trousers much too small for him, and a coat whose sleeves ran sadly short, he looked like Smike in 'Nicholas Nickleby'!

The Superior, though holding vanity in austere contempt, saw next day that this apparel would never do. Straightway every valise in the monastery was requisitioned for aid. Fr. Aylward contributed a coat, Fr. Augustine a vest, and so on. Nothing annoyed Br. Thomas more than the acuteness with which each article was recognised by the novices; and this was among the keenest of the humiliations that met him in England.

Br. Thomas was pacing up and down his room at an early hour of the morning that followed his arrival, when a young novice named Morgan, in the joy of his heart, ran in, exclaiming, 'So *you're* the new Novice-Master. Oh, Brother Thomas, I'm so glad you've come.'

No grand inquisitor could have looked more stern than did Burke in acknowledgment of this friendly overture. 'Pray, is not this silence time?' he said, to the great confusion of the boy, who slunk away, quite ashamed of himself for forgetting that from bedtime till after Mass next morning solemn silence is prescribed.

[1] Canon Brownlow heard that the lay brother, thinking he was a robber, 'threatened to set the dog at him.' On inquiry, it appears that there was no dog then or since at the monastery. The dog incident must have occurred at a farmer's house which he mistook for the convent.

This loquacious novice Burke afterwards nicknamed 'Morgan Rattler'—the hero of Tyrone Power's farce, 'How to Pay the Rent.' Morgan, on being convinced by Fr. Burke that he had no real vocation for the rule of St. Dominic, finally went on the mission, and died.

The Fathers who were then novices under Burke say that for the first year they never saw him smile. The young man was evidently oppressed by the weight of the responsibility that had been put on him. Another reason helped to make his position not a happy one. The solemn Vicar, Fr. Augustine, never viewed him cordially. He looked on Burke as a sort of spy sent by the Italian General to watch him.

The Rev. S. P. Rooke, one of the six Oxford parsons officiating at St. Saviour's, Leeds, who came over to the Catholic Church, entered as a novice at this time. He states that when Burke arrived first at Woodchester, though strengthened with the authority of his office as Master of Novices, he seemed the shyest of the shy, even when brought face to face with his companions in religion.

Though less severe and more accurate than Fr. Augustine he soon proved himself a rigid taskmaster, as every Father who served their novitiate under his rule, while loving and respecting him, will not hesitate to endorse. Among his novices was another English convert of high attainments. When the new master—expounding the Constitutions and enforcing their observance—would give a mandate or any instruction, the novice generally said, 'Aw.' Fr. Burke, in reference to those days, long after confessed that he would rather receive a torrent of Irish abuse than hear that simple word.[1]

[1] What we are now about to add has no reference to the distinguished convert just named, who was a man of high attainments and of real apostolic spirit. Father Burke said that he *found converts* manifested a great greed for austerities and penances rather than cultivated attention to their rule, of which obedience is the essence.

We have seen it stated that the intensity and beauty of the addresses which he delivered before the novices at Woodchester was something wonderful, and their general plan was that which he mostly afterwards used; but his vivid imagination would constantly present new facts and points of view, which he illustrated in a manner that quite altered the original treatment of the subject.

This account is confirmed by Fr. Lewis Weldon, who says that he never heard anything more beautiful than his chapter exhortations, especially one which viewed in glowing words all the past saints of the Order.

These exhortations were in Latin. He spoke English so imperfectly on his arrival from Rome that some instruction became necessary. There were masons at work near the monastery. 'Good morrow,' said Fr. Burke, addressing one. 'Good *morning*, we say in this country,' said the mason. The Master of Novices, quite abashed, came into the convent, informing them how he had been corrected by a workman. Some time after, the mason remarked to him encouragingly that he was 'coming on in his English'—a compliment which he received with dubious feelings.

The MS. of Fr. Paul Stapelton, one of the novices of that time, after remarking how much Br. Thomas on arrival from Rome must have found to chill him, goes on to say:

Nothing daunted, however, the Rev. Brother Thomas Burke betook himself with primitive ardour to his task, and the 'chapter of faults' weekly, and sometimes oftener, made all to tremble. The Father vicar, who was not for corporal chastisement on the one hand, proved rigid to a degree on the other, in the line of abstemiousness and fasting; and though Fr. Thomas now and then fruitlessly remonstrated in behalf of his charge, whom he declared suffered unfairly from the effects of parsimony and neglect, strange to say, he was scarcely less reasonable himself as a scourger and flogger, for he laid down most emphatically not only the principle and advantages of this discipline, but insisted upon its public use in chapter whenever he presided as novice-master. From this salutary

practice he only desisted on the understanding that the discipline be taken privately thrice in the week—a standing order which has never been violated for thirty years.

Br. Thomas had studied the life of St. Dominic, and was very familiar with this practice. After describing the saint, who remained after midnight matins before the altar, and rapt in contemplation until dawn, he adds (August 4, 1877):

> There were not only traces of tears upon the pavement, but the stains of blood—for this faithful man, as he knelt alone, would scourge himself until the same effect was produced as on the body of Christ when He knelt in His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Some Dominicans tell an incident, said to have happened to Fr. Burke, known as 'the eel-pie story.' Having inquired into it, we may at once say that two Fathers, who were at Woodchester at the time, and to whom we owe the preceding facts, say that it is new to them.[1] A story, however, which many believe, and Fr. Tom himself encouraged, must not be rudely repulsed. Among the novices who preferred leaving their salt herring uneaten were Br. Thomas and his novice, Kerril Amherst, afterwards Bishop of Northampton. To eat at other than meal times is regarded by Dominicans as a serious breach of rule. But might not a case arise which would become justifiable under the circumstances? One day, finding himself oppressed with great hunger and exhaustion, Fr. Thomas is said to have asked a lay brother for something to appease it. Nothing remained

[1] Woodchester at present is very different to what it was. Work and cheerfulness go hand in hand—exemplifying the *mens sana in corpore sano*. Its handsome new buildings present a luxury of art. Fresh fish, glittering like silver, come daily to the gate; of this the poor from every side claim the *débris*; loaves are freely distributed; hot tea dispensed; and the avidity displayed shows how well the dole is valued. The poor all belong to the Protestant faith, as well as the farm-labourers who work for the Fathers, and more conscientious servants they would not care to have.

available unless an eel-pie. He tasted it, liked it, went deeper and deeper, until, finding he had inflicted some unsightly havoc, he thought it best to make a complete clearance.

At last dinner-hour came. The savoury smell from the oven had diffused itself through the entire building, and all had looked forward to the eel-pie, just as Goldsmith did to the pasty.

> At the sides there was spinach and pudding made hot,
> In the middle a place where the pasty was not.

Great mystery prevailed as to its fate, and, of all men, the Master of Novices was not suspected. After the meal Fr. Augustine decided upon holding the *capitulum culparum*, or chapter of faults, when each religious is bound to disclose, in an audible voice, some recent failing.[1] The Superior threw himself back in his arm-chair, and each successively accused himself of a fault. When it came to the turn of the Master of Novices, he mentioned having eaten out of meal-times. 'I don't distinctly hear you.' The disclosure was repeated. 'What did you eat?' 'Pastry.' 'What sort?' 'An eel-pie.'

All such questioning after particulars—to the confusion of the offender—would not now be sanctioned, assuming that the scene really occurred. The spirit of the Constitutions would be satisfied by an avowal of this breach in 'eating out of meal-times.' Sometimes in chapter a Father or novice gently

[1] 'This,' says St. Thomas of Aquin, 'is a work of humility which is agreeable to God and salutary to the sinner.' It is so regarded by St. Francis de Sales, who recommends it amongst other works of perfection. The Jesuits say in their Constitutions, 'The religious ought not to be *constrained* to give an account of conscience out of confession, because they are allowed an entire liberty herein for each person's particular comfort;' and Rodrigues says, 'No person is obliged to give an account of any grievous sin; for the rule does not oblige him thereto, as it would be too severe, and few could submit to it, and such proceeding would be against the intention of the rule and of the founder.'—Vide *Life, Times, and Correspondence of Bishop Doyle*, vol. i. pp. 523-6. The title 'Chapter' took its origin in the fact that it was, and is, customary with monks to assemble daily to hear a chapter of the Rule read.

reminds another of a fault, and notwithstanding the risk and delicacy of such a course, not a particle of pique ever results. How rigorous Fr. Burke was in abstinence we know from the Dominicans with whom he finally lived; but it must have been carried to a remarkable degree when the newspapers thought fit to notice it. In 1874, a memoir—the result of careful inquiry—appeared in the *Nation*. Among other glimpses of his life, we learn—

> Nor is it known how often, in times of fast, after an hour or more in the pulpit of St. Saviour's, he has returned, without the smallest refreshment, to his convent at Tallaght, that he might keep intact the rule of his Order. Patient and even cheerful endurance prove a man's resolution and heroism more than scaling the breach or charging up to the cannon's mouth.

The Fr. Vicar had required them to observe the rigid fast on Sundays; but it was clear to Burke and the more intelligent Fathers that this mandate infringed the Constitutions; and an opportunity was taken to leave the book on his table, hoping that, by some lucky thought, he would open the part that explained the law. What was their delight when the vicar one day came in wearing an unwonted smile, and remarked, 'Would you believe, I was quite wrong in including Sundays?' Had the novices, or even Fathers, ventured to point out his mistake, he would simply have replied, 'No, sir,' and, if possible, tightened the curb.

'Fr. Vicar, I'm hardly able to speak with a bilious headache—may I retire to my cell?' a novice asked. 'No, sir,' was the reply of this dauntless soldier of suffering.

Once while matins were being sung at midnight, a novice fell insensible in the choir. The Vicar had him stretched at full length, and then resumed the Psalmody, during which he gradually recovered.

It is often necessary to bless the alb, and Fr. Burke told his Irish brethren that, instead of sprinkling with holy water, the Vicar all but saturated it—literally inter-

preting, as usual, the words from Ezek. xxxvi. 25: 'I will pour upon you clean water, and you shall be cleansed.' The good Vicar, however, well knew that holy water possesses no virtue of its own, and derived its utility from the prayers said over it by the Church, that all who use it may gain spiritual and temporal health.[1]

Of course the novices dare not read newspapers; but it gratified Br. Thomas to gather that, on the great trial, 'Achilli *v.* Newman,' at this time, Lord Campbell, after a careful study of the Constitutions of the Dominican Order, pronounced them a truly admirable code.

No contrast could well be greater than between the stirring scenes of Rome and the enforced seclusion of Woodchester; but he remembered how even laics, like Southey and Wordsworth, had fled from the vanities of the world, and lived hermits from choice, among scenes equally sequestered. By degrees he found that Rome and Woodchester were interwoven by ties other than religious. The ploughshare had turned up Roman coins, fine tesselated pavement, fragments of Italian pottery, and other relics, which led to the conclusion that the Emperor Hadrian had erst made Woodchester—or, as he styled it, 'Udecestre'—his abode.

All this time Fr. Augustine, in addition to his work as Procurator, discharged the duties of parish priest, and some conversions were, no doubt, due to him. One day word came that 'the erring man wished to see him.' He hurried down, but found that it was merely the herring man, who was desirous of knowing when it would be convenient to settle his account.

Br. Thomas never allowed the novices out, unless when he himself, or a *socius* specially delegated, accompanied them. There was one walk through the park which he frequently

[1] The alb, or white linen vestment with sleeves—the emblem of purity—has been worn from the earliest times by Priests during the celebration of Mass. Fr. Augustine, continuing to interpret *sur la lettre*, remembered that the Priest, when putting on the alb, is bound to repeat the prayer, 'Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.'

brought them, and led to a rugged seat that he called '*usque ad lapidem.*' One day, Br. Vincent observing that a great shower was likely to fall, asked leave to return to the convent. 'Go on,' said Burke, 'you're not made of sugar or salt;' and on he stalked, his ample robe fluttering in the breeze, and followed by the little brood that he gathered under his wing. He had not got far when the floodgates of heaven opened, and all were speedily wet to the skin. Burke led the van home with drooping plumage; and the entire party cut such a forlorn figure, that in passing the village alehouse a peal of loud laughter was raised at their expense. Burke winced under the taunt. The men renewed their merriment. That evening he wrote to a Mr. Clark, their employer, who threatened to dismiss the men unless they begged Br. Burke's pardon. Fr. Augustine was mystified next day on observing a gang of men round the priory door; they asked to see the Master of Novices. 'Please, sir, we're sorry,' the spokesman said. 'But it wasn't we—it was the ale.' The tavern where the incident occurred is the 'Nag's Head'—a name in itself suggestive of stirring memories to a theologian. There was a factory in the town, and Fr. Burke, on his return to Ireland, described the operatives—their faces all blue and with sardonic grin—peering out of the windows as they passed. One fellow yelled after them, 'Dominus vobiscum'—alluding, of course, to the well-known words used by the priest when, during Mass, he turns to the congregation.

Br. Thomas had heard from his novices that more than once they had been pelted with stones, and he judged that it would be well to show some manhood. Whenever such incidents were repeated—and they are an experience with every Father who has been at Woodchester—they found it wise to advance calmly towards the enemy, who thereupon slunk away. 'To fly from such missiles,' he said, 'would only lead to a renewal of the sport;' and he explained that it was possible to interpret too literally the 'Imitation of Christ,'

where it says (III. ch. xiii.), 'Show thyself so submissive and so little that all may trample on thee and tread thee under their feet as the dust of the road.'

Every walk discovered new beauties or some thrilling tradition. In Berkeley Castle—the most perfectly preserved specimen of ancient feudal architecture—is shown the room in which Edward II. was murdered; 'his wailful noise (says Holinshed), as the tormentors fell upon him, did plainly move many within the town to compassion.' Br. Thomas often visited the graveyard, and traced with deep interest the epitaph penned by Swift, beginning:

Here lies the Earl of Suffolk's fool,
Men called him Dicky Pearce;
His folly served to make folks laugh
When wit and mirth were scarce.

Poor Dick, alas! is dead and gone,
What signifies to cry?
Dickys enough are left behind
To laugh at by-and-by—

a piece of philosophy which our Dominican thoroughly endorsed. Foster Court was another branch of the property round which the same class of tradition as at Woodchester floats. Woodchester Park had belonged to the historic Huntleys; and the circumstances under which Colonel Huntley came by his death here encourages the popular belief that all night long a spiritual horseman traverses its hills and dales.

There was something which Br. Thomas held in livelier dread than witches on broomsticks or even spectral horsemen. Among minor worries, rats now appeared. One noisy creature having been caught by the foot, was playfully pressed on his acquaintance, by a person who felt so privileged. The Master yelled so loudly that the austere Vicar rushed to the spot, but with his usual energy in trying to kill the rat he smashed the trap.

Thomas Burke tried to effect some changes at Woodchester. These the Fr. Vicar would freezingly cut short by replying, 'We don't do such things in England.' After Fr. Burke's arrival, and in fact until recently, all continued to rise for matins at midnight.

During the rainy and cold months of the year (writes a Dominican Father) it was found exceedingly trying to rise from a warm bed to walk down a wet or snowy road to the cold damp church for midnight matins, especially during the long fasting season. Still the courageous little band of apostolic men persevered in their zeal.

A large sewer was being made across the road, and one night a Father disappeared altogether. Fr. Austin Maltus was a man of weakly frame and emaciated habit; and it was not without some trouble that stronger arms rescued him from what seemed his living grave. Work being the real object with friars-preachers, Fr. Burke wisely felt that strength ought not to be impaired by broken sleep. He quietly represented this and other ill-judged austerities to the Master-General Jandel.

At 3.45 A.M. all rise to their day's work at Woodchester. Each religious is called with the words 'Benedicamus Domine, to which comes the prompt response, 'Deo Gratias.'[1]

[1] The writer having been, through the kindness of the Fathers, an inmate of the monastery for some days, he is able to convey an idea of the routine. Matins, 4 to 5 A.M. Contemplation, 5 to 6. Angelus Domini, 6 [repeated at 12, and 6 P.M.]. Mass, 6.45. Collation 7.15. From bedtime till after Mass next day profound silence reigns, which is a grave fault to break. Simple silence is observed until after dinner at 12.30. During meals Scripture and history are read aloud. If such a rare case occurs as that there has been great violation of rule, the offender gets bread and water. After dinner converse is allowed until Vespers at 1.30. Study or instruction is then resumed, ending sometimes with a walk. Compline and Rosary then come, and at times Benediction. It is a grand spectacle to see the religious, hooded and motionless, engaged in contemplation of the various stages of Christ's Passion. In Fr. Augustine's time no meat under any circumstances was allowed. Fish as diet is still the rule; but one room is now set apart for those whose strength requires meat to sustain it. Here one Father is allowed to talk during dinner, it being probably felt that even pleasing monologue favours digestion. Fr. Burke was the first to explain to Fr. Augustine that the Rule as framed by St. Dominic was full of a holy liberty. As regards the period when simple silence is understood to prevail, it may be remarked that the

Although Br. Thomas was sent by the General, charged with a certain weight of authority, he bore his faculties most meekly, and the Father Vicar was, of course, his superior, whom he was bound to obey. Br. Thomas felt with à Kempis (Book III. c. xiii.) that 'if a man does not freely and willingly submit himself to his superior, it is a sign that his flesh is not as yet perfectly obedient to him.'

Among the trials on which the survivors look back was an order to make a new road near the convent. Br. Burke and the novices daily toiled at their uncongenial work. But that which teased them most was the gibes and rustic coquetries of the factory girls as they passed to and fro. One novice was accused of not working well, and they threatened to report him to his 'master.' Other coarse chaff —needless to reproduce here—followed. The novices represented to Fr. Augustine how disconcerting all this was, but the intrepid ascetic told them to regard it as suffering for justice' sake. Down went the pick-axe, stroke after stroke, as if seeking to stifle language so unhallowed. Spades would ply with increased clink and activity; and as the stony soil rattled into the cart, it recalled to some of the orphaned novices the day when similar sounds came from a mother's grave. One woman, whom Burke had nicknamed 'Rhoudlum,' brandished a fork as he passed, and felt privileged to say to him, 'Thee shall marry I.' One day he stood scared to hear that this forward person was actually at the convent gate. 'I'm coom for instrooctions,' she at last said, when challenged to explain. She became a pious convert, and to this hour remains steadfast.[1]

real spirit of that rule is never to speak without necessity. If a lay Brother or Father should be addressed by a stranger, he may respond on the presumed leave of the Prior. Fathers are sometimes told off to entertain visitors; and none brighter could be desired. To us they seemed to unite the rich humour of Rabelais to the polish of a Chesterfield.

[1] Her name is Daniel. Her daughter is now 'sacristaness' of the Dominican Church at Woodchester. Fr. Burke made effective reference to the above ncident in one of his sermons. Our reverend informant describes her as re-

'The crucial test' was now about to be applied.

The Church (says Fr. Burke) admits within her sanctuary, to minister at her altars, only the eyes that have never looked upon evil, the hands that have never been defiled, the feet that have never trodden in the paths of iniquity; she demands from every one of her ministers the searching crucial question, Is there a virgin soul in a virgin body? and if not she bids them stand aside, save themselves in some other walk of life, but not to dare enter the sanctuary.

And again:

Why this esteem of the Church for holy purity? Because in God there is nothing material. He is a pure Spirit, pure action. And, therefore, whatever approaches by immateriality—as virginity in its highest form does to God—in the same proportion does that thing become holy and Godlike. 'Why,' asks St. Jerome, 'was John the only one of the twelve allowed to lay his bosom on Christ at the Last Supper?' They are all there trembling with fear—they apprehend for the first time the mystery of mysteries; they are going to receive their Lord. One overpowered with love comes and sits side by side with Jesus, and leans his head upon that bosom, until his ear catches the beating of His Sacred Heart. 'How had he such courage?' demands St. Jerome. He was the only one of the twelve a virgin, and, therefore, he was the most loved and honoured of all.[1]

In 1852 our novice received the Holy Orders of the subdiaconate and diaconate, at Oscott, from Dr. Ullathorne, Bishop of Birmingham.

Among the privileges thus conferred was one most congenial to him—that of singing the Gospel at High Mass. He could also give Communion in case of necessity; preach if permitted, and baptise with the parish priest. The deacon in earlier times exercised other important functions. In the Apostolical Constitutions he is pronounced to be 'the ear, eye,

sembling Meg Merrilies. He never could understand why Fr. Burke called her 'Rhoudlum;' but this character will be remembered in Lever's *Knight of Gwynne*.

[1] Fr. Burke for the Magdalen Asylum, Cork, February 4, 1877. He had the authority of St. Paul (1 Cor. vii. 25) for its use in the above sense, and of Tennyson, 'For I was ever virgin save for thee.'

mouth, heart, and soul of the bishop;' and even whole congregations were committed to his care. But while formerly a man often remained a deacon all his life, the office is now regarded as a preliminary one to the priesthood. Traces of the ancient discipline are still found at Rome, where some cardinals, like Antonelli, remain deacons for life.[1]

It was now five years since Thomas Burke had seen his relatives in Galway. He did not like to present himself to his sainted mother until he had something to show which would gratify her long-cherished desire, and prove that his religious training had produced fruit. His tonsure, his Roman collar, long-tailed coat, and solemnity of expression, made 'Nicholas,' as he knelt for the maternal blessing, acceptable in her sight. He then visited Dr. Lawrence O'Donnell, the venerable Bishop of Galway. This prelate belonged to the old school, and, noticing his tonsure, said, 'What God gave you man might *lave* you.' Before he left Galway, Thomas Burke exercised his privilege as deacon of assisting at a Pontifical High Mass in the church of St. Nicholas. Here his tonsure again became the subject of comment. Its use was not general among Irish Dominicans until ten years later; and Galway knew not what to make of it. 'What a shame

[1] The bishop followed the usual rite by questioning the archdeacon in attendance as to whether the aspirant for deacon's orders was thoroughly eligible; and then appealed to all present to state publicly any reason within their knowledge tending to disqualification. After a pause the bishop proceeded to enlarge upon the duties and dignities of the deacon. An anathema is pronounced against any novice who would leave the church when the mysteries of ordination had once commenced; and he is warned that, if the vocation should seem to falter, to withdraw ere it be too late. To the administered vows of perpetual chastity, poverty, and obedience, the novices, if numerous, express assent by one simultaneous step forward. They then cast themselves on their faces and remain prostrate, while the choir recites the Litany of Saints. Dr. Ullathorne gave thanks to God for the institution of the Sacred Ministry, and then proceeded to the essence of the rite. Placing his right hand on our Levite, he said, 'Receive the Holy Ghost for strength and for resisting the Devil and all his temptations in the name of the Lord.' Then investing him with the stole on the left shoulder, he made him touch the Gospels, while he prayed God to enable him 'to perform the work of the ministry by the gift of His sevenfold grace.' The sacrament was finally crowned by the imposition of hands, as taught in the Acts of the Apostles.

to let that young man officiate, and *he* just after putting the fever over him,' was a remark which our deacon overheard as he stood at the foot of the altar. All this and more he told Fr. Lewis Weldon on his return to Woodchester. The wonder only is how, on the last occasion described, he was able to keep his countenance. But he had always great power of facial command and restraint.

St. Thomas holds that the diaconate is as much a sacrament as the episcopate and priesthood. Any baptised may receive the first validly provided he intends to do so.[1] 'A deacon,' said Fr. Burke, 'is recognised by the Council of Trent as belonging to the hierarchy divinely constituted.'[2] He attached such just importance to the diaconate, and he looked so innocent, that a funny Galway priest sought to persuade him that the office might be discharged by any prudish spinster. He was even reminded, on the authority of the Apostolical Constitutions (viii. 27), that deaconesses assisted at the baptism of females by giving unctions after the deacon; that they received Orders 'by laying on of hands,' and in some cases received even the stole and chalice.[3] But our deacon replied, with Tertullian, that the exclusion of women from ecclesiastical affairs was a principle of the Latin Church, though Pliny certainly mentions two Christian *ministræ*.

It is said that Fr. Augustine tried the humility of Br. Thomas and the novices by imposing on them such menial offices as to sweep out their cells, and sometimes the church; but all are obliged by the Constitutions to do this work in turn. One day Br. Thomas told a novice to go to Br. Dalmatius for the broom. This was a lay brother whom the people always insisted on calling 'Brother Damnation.'[4] The

[1] But the Thomists aver that an infant or maniac may validly receive any order except the episcopate, and it is the only opinion of St. Thomas Aquinas that cannot well be maintained.

[2] For the Ladies' Association of St. Vincent de Paul.

[3] *Vide* Hefele, *Concil.* § 429 *et seq.*

[4] They also called Fr. Antoninus 'Fr. Ananias.' An old woman, whenever she wanted to see Fr. Fife, O.P., asked for 'Fr. Flute.'

novice returned to say that he was using the broom. 'Go again,' said the Master of Novices. Once more the novice returned without the broom. 'What does he say?' said the Master of Novices, colouring. 'He said he'd give it to you about the back!' declared the truthful envoy. Burke could hardly believe his ears. He at once lodged a complaint with the Fr. Vicar, who cited Br. Dalmatius before his austere presence. 'Did *you* say this?' 'Yes, Father.' After a solemn pause the Vicar continued, 'Did *you* mean it?' 'No —merely as a joke.' 'There, Br. Thomas,' said the Vicar, 'perhaps you are now satisfied.' Burke became so at once, and returned to the novices loud in praise of that grand old man, whose finest feature was his strict sense of justice.

One of Burke's favourite novices was Br. George King, a youth of marked mental power and genial qualities, who has been twice elected Provincial. He received his education under Fr. Augustine at Hinckley lay school, and was present when Mr. Leigh[1] made his pilgrimage thither to offer Woodchester to the Dominicans.

Burke christened him 'Georgius Rex,' just as he called Fr. Lewis Weldon 'Lud,' and sometimes '*Well done*, thou true and faithful servant.' Our Master of Novices is next found with 'Georgius Rex' beating carpets. He had now begun to see that it was in him to do higher things; and, though he never grumbled against such orders, his nature quite recoiled from the work, and he told 'Georgius Rex' exactly what he felt. 'The first time I preached,' says Sydney Smith, 'I raised such a cloud on striking the cushion that I lost sight of my congregation.' Similar clouds now rose, but without the excitation attendant on pulpit oratory. Burke

[1] William Leigh, Esq., lord of the manor of Woodchester and Nymphsfield, was born in 1802, and married in 1828 Caroline, daughter of Sir J. Geers Cotterell, Bart., Hereford. Mr. Leigh became a Catholic at the time of the Oxford movement, and in testimony of his services to the Church received from the Pope a Knight Commandership of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great. Mr. Leigh's grandson is now in the Diaconate of the Catholic Priesthood.

winced under this drudgery, and his feelings probably found a safety valve in the muscular strokes which fell; but at last the carpets passed to other hands.

He had been now at Woodchester more than a year; and during that time his face—solemn as a sepulchral urn—never for a moment relaxed. We have already tried to account for the cloud which seemed to shadow his generally bright nature. Further light may be thrown by some thoughts of his own.

The pleasure of standing upon the soil of our birth; the pleasure of preserving the associations that surrounded our boyhood; the pleasure—sad though it be—of watching every grey hair and wrinkle that time sends even to those whom we love, these are amongst the keenest and the best of which the heart of man is capable. Therefore it is that, at all times, exile from native land has been looked upon by men as a penalty and a grievance. This is true even of men whom nature has placed upon the most barren soil. The Swiss peasant, who lives amidst the everlasting snows of the Upper Alps, who sees no form of beauty in Nature except her grandest and most austere and rugged proportions, yet so dearly loves his arid mountain-home, that it heart-breaks him to be banished from it, even though he were placed to spend his days in the choicest quarters of the earth. Much more does the pain of exile rest upon the children of a race, at once the most generous and the most loving in the world, a race who look back to the mother-land as to a fair and beautiful land; a climate temperate; soil fruitful and abundant; scenery, now rising into the glory of magnificence, now sinking into the tenderest pastoral beauty; a history the grandest; associations the safest, because the most Christian and the purest. These, and more, enhance the pain which the Irishman, of all men, feels when exiled from his native land.

But cheerfulness is the daughter of employment, and he had soon quite enough to do to perform the increased work that his superiors had mapped out for him.

How his ways became more genial and his face less imperturbable may be told. One day Br. Thomas chanced to hear that, owing to the severity with which he enforced among his novices a strict observance of their Rule, he had

acquired the nickname of 'the Nigger.'[1] His complexion being sallow, the *sobriquet* seemed to fit him. Instead of showing the annoyance which he certainly felt, Br. Thomas amiably sought to put them at ease by assuming henceforth the pleasant exuberance of a genial schoolfellow. He became, indeed, in a new sense, the angel of the schools. The funniest performances were enacted for the amusement of his astonished followers. His first mimicry was of a thing inanimate. There stood in the sacristy of the church a tall, gaunt old clock, whose oak-cased breast seemed to heave with its wheezy tick and weight of years. Our deacon 'posted himself' against the wall, made his face like a dial, and swung his arm as a pendulum to the measured stroke of tick, tick, tick, tick! followed by the guttural sound which always preceded its effort to announce the hour.

When anything in a convent happens to be mislaid, a paper announcing the fact is put on the loser's door. An old priest in second childhood, who amused himself with a Noah's ark, lost several things, and one of the first proofs of Br. Thomas's humour was a list suspended from the priest's door, which announced in Hudibrastic verse the various 'deficits.' This document created quite a noise in the cloisters.[2]

A man who is said to have been associated in this squib was Br. Bernard Morewood. He had been a Protestant, and

[1] It hardly needs to add that, while recognising him as a severe taskmaster, his novices loved him too. 'An intense affection always existed between Fr. Tom and all the Fathers of the English province,' writes their present head, Fr. Williams, O.P., one of his novices. 'He was quite at home with us, and seemed to understand us so well, and we revered him and loved him in the most genuine manner.'—*V. R. Antoninus Williams, O.P., to the Author, August* 18, 1884.

[2] The Rev. Louis Gerard, known in religion as Fr. Mary Joseph, having witnessed many of the horrors of the French Revolution, took refuge in the fleet of Admiral Lord Hood during the siege of Toulon, and became a naturalised Englishman. He taught for eleven years in London, co-operated in founding five missions, served under Milner, and finally joined the Dominicans at Woodchester. Here the old man went through his novitiate with beardless boys, and on March 25, 1853, made his solemn profession. Whenever Fr. Burke whistled the *Ça ira* it threw Mary Joseph Gerard into an agony. Though hailing from the land of the light fantastic toe, he had always proved himself 'dead against dancing.'

surprised his friends by joining the small Dominican colony at Woodchester. His wit and antecedents attracted Fr. Burke. Many a discussion on subtle theological points took place between them; and the shower of sparks which fell from the clash of their weapons was at times bright enough. The doctrine of exclusive salvation, as laid down in the damnatory clause of the Athanasian Creed, had long been a principle of the Church of England. Morewood had subscribed to it in both churches. Seemingly struck by the Scriptural passage, 'The Father is greater than I,' Morewood one day personated a Socinian. Burke called him a blockhead, adding, 'What will be your feelings when you hear the devil exclaim, "Here comes *Morewood* for the fire!"'[1] Later on he nicknamed him 'Le Brûlé.'

With increased work came the need for wholesome relaxation; and Thomas Burke is sometimes found much the same boy that Galway knew him. His old powers now burst forth the more freely because of the reserve that had so long enchained them.

On one occasion, when silence was understood to prevail, though not severely prescribed, Br. Thomas, standing on a stool, was mimicking for the amusement of his novices the cross-examination of equivocating witnesses, ending with 'You may go down, sir.' The handle of the door suddenly turned, and the austere face of the Vicar peeped in, sternly saying to Burke, who keenly felt it, 'Go down, sir!'

When pastor of Cobridge his flock begged for permission to dance. For a time Fr. Gerard seemed inexorable, but at length relented. 'De gentilmen,' he said 'must dance in one room, and de demoiselles in anoder.' This was not meant for a joke. Fr. Gerard was utterly impervious to all sense of humour, and regarded the relentless efforts of the Master of Novices to chaff him as the effect of some mental eccentricity which only excited his pity. He survived until October 1856, when he fell with the leaves, and was buried in the cloister yard.

[1] Two other converts who came to Woodchester about this time were Robert Fenton, a citizen of Gloucester, and Joseph Platt from Leicester. Both entered as lay Brothers, and remained with the Dominicans until their death—the first in 1873, the latter in 1880. Morewood became a priest and went to India, where he very suddenly died.

Part of the awe which the Father Vicar inspired—he had filled the highest offices in the Order—was due to the fact that he never addressed the friars as 'Father,' but always frigidly as 'sir.' 'You'll preach to-day, sir,' would be the only notice given some twenty minutes before the sermon—often even less. One day, during some church service, after the Father Vicar had removed the chasuble, he peered down the aisle, and, observing a friar who disliked to preach on short notice, raised his fleshless finger and beckoned him to the pulpit. Obedience is the spirit of the Dominican Rule, and this Superior constantly sought to test it.

We learn from an Irish Dominican, on Fr. Burke's own assurance, that one day when he was going into the pulpit to deliver a well-prepared sermon on the Passion, the Vicar ordered him to change the subject to matrimony, as he judged from the character of the congregation that it would be more likely to interest them. So sudden a change was embarrassing; but Fr. Burke taking as his text, from Genesis, 'A spouse of love thou art to me,' preached on the union of Christ and the Church as the type of matrimony, and naturally passed into the region which the vicar had directed.

To 'preach in season and out of season' was among the Master's new duties. 'He wrote out carefully word for word his sermons, and took great pains in getting them up,' writes his novice, now a distinguished preacher himself, Fr. Pius Cavanagh. 'He used to preach with his eyes shut, and showed a certain timidity. His natural modesty and simplicity of character made him shy of the public gaze.' [1]

Fr. Paul Stapelton's MS. may now be quoted:

There was a simplicity and yet an earnestness of purpose in Fr. Burke that was bound to succeed; for instance, in his early days at Nymphsfield he would rehearse before his two companions, now

[1] Letter of Fr. Pius Cavanagh, O.P., St. Dominic's Priory, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

remarkable Fathers in the order, his discourse or catechism, and ask them what to amend and alter; and with quite childlike docility he took their advice, though much his juniors and his subjects besides. And not only in his pulpit experiences was this his habit, but in what he really excelled in by way of diversion—marvellous histrionic powers. His art of mimicry was the result of study; for any picture in *Punch*, or any scrap that contained 'a character,' was enough for him. With a mirror and the original by its side, he set to, and put his face through so many contortions that at last he cried, 'Victory,' and at once procceded to call in a friend or 'novice' to witness his success; and woe betide the one who would *easily* comply with his question, 'Is that it—look?' To say 'Yes' in an off-hand way would not do. It was a serious business, and whether Fr. Tom was or was not as *good* as the old fish-wife, or decrepit old toper, or dilapidated old pedlar, in the picture, was a crucial test of many a one's power of perception. Yes, even to the least twitch of the mouth or turn of the lips, &c., again and again he would sit for the observer, and to the slightest suggestion he was as responsive as the least little one in the nursery. Nor would he desist until perfection was attained.

Mr. Capes, a distinguished Oxford convert of the Low Church School, and afterwards editor of the *Rambler*, maintained close relations of intimacy with the friars, and would probably have donned the Dominican habit but that he was already married. Burke, on his return from Italy, spoke and wrote Italian better than English; but he now hammered away at the MS. of his sermons with such vigour that they seemed to develop into sheets of gold-leaf—ornate enough, but wanting in simplicity, and were therefore condemned. He first submitted the MS. to his novices, and finally to Mr. Capes for revision.

The same stern correction which made Burke a good boy now made him a good writer. In one of his MSS. he described the women of Jerusalem as *precipitating* their children from its walls. Burke said that Mr. Capes gave him the choice of 'tossed' or 'cast,'[1] and confessed that he felt

[1] Statement of Fr. Burke to Fr. Lewis Weldon, O.P., to Very Rev. C. H. Condon, O.P., and others.

tempted to 'precipitate' jaw-breakers into the fire. As this episode is not without instruction for young preachers, some further details may be added.

I well remember Fr. Burke telling me (writes a Dominican) how his censor, who was a man of much culture, but severe in his taste, used mercilessly to prune away all his fine fancies and exuberant imaginations, and bid him keep to more sober narrative in his exposition of the Gospel history. One of the canons he laid down for guidance in the choice of words was never to use an English word coming to us from the Latin when he could get a word of like meaning of Saxon birth; the latter, he contended, being more forcible and more readily understood than the former.[1]

Mr. Capes still lives, and he tells us that this is 'the advice he should give to any man who wants to write in a clear, pure, and forcible way.' Mr. Capes was an able writer, but his vigorous views seemed sometimes to overleap the line of Catholic orthodoxy. For a time he returned to the Church of England, but has again been received back by the Dominican Fathers. It is to be regretted that Fr. Burke did not live to see his return, for he had never ceased to deplore the loss of Capes to the Church.

Fr. Paul Utili, D.D., heard Burke's first sermon. 'His eyes remained closed throughout the entire delivery, and his mouth gave constant indications of its parched and fevered state.'

He was, indeed, very nervous, and the religious prejudices with which he had now come more directly into contact increased this feeling. Addressing an American audience on civil and religious liberty, he referred to these days:

I have lived as a priest in England, afraid to go outside my own door for fear of insult and outrage. In passing along the streets in a town where the population embraced but few Catholics, I have

[1] Letter from the Very Rev. M. A. Costello, O.P., to the Author, San Clemente, Rome, May 15, 1884.

been personally assailed by the school children with stones, and the teacher did not reprimand them.[1]

Happily, such incidents are now as rare as the fall of meteoric stones. During the period that Fr. Burke ministered in England sectarian feeling ran high, consequent on the nomination by the Pope of bishops to rule English sees. *A propos* to which some one said that the English were bad judges of cattle, because when the Pope sent them a bull they thought it a *bore*. Fr. Burke told Fr. Eugene Browne that a lady who admired the writings of Cardinal Wiseman sped to catch a glimpse of him at Gloucester, where he was advertised to preach. Her thoughts were so full of Cardinal Wiseman that every cleric she saw in the train was at once suspected to be the man. At last, observing on the platform a pompous-looking person with a red nose, she commissioned a porter to inquire as to his identity from the party himself. On his return he said that it must be his Eminence, and on being asked why, answered, 'Because he told me to go to the devil.' The reply is expressive of the feeling with which Roman Catholic ecclesiastics were regarded at that time.

No doubt Fr. Burke's undisguised nationality had something to do with the 'rubs' that occasionally met him. When lecturing at Liverpool three years before his death, he said:

I may perhaps be met at the outset by the objection that there are no distinctive national features amongst the Irish race. Bosh! You are just the same as any other people. Not a bit of difference between you. Let me ask, Is there a human animal on two feet walking on the face of the earth that is more easily known than an Irishman? Six-and-twenty years ago I spent the first years of my priesthood in England, and no one ever yet saw my face and heard me open my mouth without instantly exclaiming, good-naturedly or ill-naturedly, 'Sir, you are an Irishman.' There was no mistaking. The Almighty has branded it upon my face; He has put it upon every

[1] At Hartford, Connecticut, May 7, 1872.

member of my body; He has, I hope, imprinted it upon my soul, and certainly He has put it upon my tongue.[1]

Quiet Woodchester was disturbed at this time by hand-bills announcing that certain unhallowed practices of Rome would be exposed by one who had cast off the slough of a slavish superstition.[2] Fathers Gavazzi and Achilli had created a *furore* by lectures of a similar spirit and aim, and this new crusade promised to prove not a bad speculation. Alessandri Messina, the lecturer on this occasion, claimed to be the son of a Papal Count, and was familiarly known as 'the Prophet.' The sequel exhibits the growing spirit of Burke. Knowing the bigotry of the rural population, and their readiness to swallow any absurd tale that favoured their prejudices, he quietly resolved to attend the lecture, and, if possible, confute the reviler. One version of this incident states that Burke, not relishing the task, his Prior put it on him as a duty to go; but inquiry has proved the statement to be untrue. In the Dissenting chapel at Nymphsfield the thunder threatened to roll. Burke, accompanied by Fr. Bernard Morewood, entered while evening service was going on. He found a large congregation, composed largely of peasants, but including also some persons of culture and status. At last 'the Convert Italian Prophet' opened his indictment. With much absurdity of assertion, disregard of history, and ignorance of the places he described, were mixed up some sharp points; and the hot flesh and blood of the young Celt somewhat winced under the punctures. Addressing the presiding clergyman, he claimed the right of reply; but it was intimated

[1] 'The Church in its Relation to the Irish People,' at Liverpool, Oct. 5, 1880.

[2] Other preachers of a low type afterwards came. The visit of Murphy occasioned much bad feeling, and Squire Leigh's carriage, as it passed that in which Murphy sat, was stoned. Mr. Leigh ordered his coachman to stop, and, pointing to Murphy, said, 'Do you see that man with red hair and nose a little redder still—would you be able to know him again?' This sally created more merriment than alarm. However, Murphy soon after wholly collapsed, and the neighbourhood has since enjoyed the pastoral peace for which nature designed it.

that such could not be allowed. Again he begged leave to give an account of the faith that was in him.

'Fr. Burke told me,' writes Mr. Molloy, the brother of one of his novices, 'that he got several broad hints to make himself scarce; and, as well as I can recollect, he had at one time some apprehension of personal violence. His pluck and ready wit pulled him through. He admitted that the priests *might* have offended them, that the Pope was not infallible; but what had he, Tom Burke, ever done? He managed to get on some "stump," and in half-jest, whole-in-earnest, played them as he would a salmon in his native Galway.'

Immediately a man cried out, 'Fair play for Purgatory;' and another said, 'Hear the long fellow.' The strange scene ended by our Dominican, fully habited, mounting the Protestant pulpit and delivering a discourse. He showed the ignorance, the disingenuousness, the invention of Messina. He had himself studied in the very college where some of the things alleged by the lecturer were said to have occurred, and he proved from the man's own statement that he could never have been there. Further, he showed his utter ignorance of the Italian language. 'Out of thy own mouth I judge thee' was never more literally exemplified. Meanwhile the *soi-disant* Italian disappeared, leaving Burke master of the field. His reply, if it did not completely carry the audience with him, at least satisfied them.

Mr. Joshua Smyth and his wife were amongst the first who became Catholics at Nymphsfield. We lately visited them, and were glad to find that they well remembered Fr. Burke and his encounter with 'the Prophet.' Smyth says that his real name was Benson. He cut a great splash, and arrived in a chariot and horses from Cheltenham. Routed by Fr. Burke, he drove away in the same style, finally drawing up at the bank on the plea of getting a cheque cashed, wherewith to pay the job-master's bill. The postillion waited patiently,

and at last went into the bank to see what was keeping him. The prophet, after entering by the front door, had gone out at the rear, and thus, as a local wag said, 'there was a *false profit* on the job.'

It is stated by Fr. Pius Cavanagh—himself highly distinguished as a preacher—that the first real outburst of Burke's power in the pulpit was shown on the occasion when Fr. Aylward, who had been conducting a retreat, fell ill, and the young Irishman on short notice was ordered to take his place. Fr. Aylward was no ordinary man. He wrote several books on the mystical element in religion and other subjects, was a Lector of Philosophy and Theology, and twice filled the office of Provincial.

On Holy Saturday, March 26, 1853, Thomas Burke was ordained priest by Dr. Burgess, Bishop of Clifton.

> The holy oil of the priesthood was poured upon his head, and with the sacred unction his hands were anointed, and head and hand were henceforth dedicated to the sole service of his Saviour—that head endowed with mind, that hand clean of all guilt before God.[1]

Fr. Burke received final orders with a deep sense of the powers that conferred such privileges, and, without making any demonstration, became filled with zeal for the salvation of souls. He thought of the friars who in early ages had raised the standard of the Cross, and resolved that at the fitting time he would emulate their labours.

His first Mass was celebrated on Easter Sunday 1853, in Woodchester Church. Fr. Towers, now head of the Irish Dominicans, was the first incumbent of the Nymphsfield mission, but, leaving England in the April of that year, Thomas Burke succeeded to the charge. The work was so light here that Fr. Stapelton, in his MS., styles it 'a small domestic mission, belonging to Woodchester Park, the residence of William Leigh, Esq.'

[1] Fr. Burke on St. Dominic, St. Saviour's, Dublin, Aug. 4, 1877.

Thrown in with Woodchester Park—the property which Mr. Leigh bought from Lord Ducie—is the village of Nymphsfield, on the old coach road from Gloucester to Bristol. 'These villagers,' said Mr. Bridges, 'are the descendants of Beer and Sin.' Here are a Protestant church and a Dissenting chapel. A few villagers embraced Catholicism, and Mr. Leigh converted a disused inn, three hundred years old, into a chapel and sacristy sufficient for the wants of a small mission. Meagre as his audience was, Fr. Burke was said to have felt so dazzled by their stare that he preached with his eyes shut.

Was he trying to repeat correctly the discourse he had prepared by excluding all cause of distraction? The chapel had been the ball-room of the deserted hostelry; and, thanks to local tradition, he could almost hear renewed the notes of the old violin and the tramp of those, long since in dust, who danced down the floor in Sir Roger de Coverley.

And then what memories would the old fireplace awaken? Hundreds had sat round that hearth listening, mayhap, to thrilling tales, or the side-splitting jokes of Dicky Pearce, to whose grave Fr. Burke had made a pilgrimage in the spirit of Shakspere's soliloquy on Yorick. Swift, too, is said to have sat in the old hostelry during his many visits to Lord Berkeley, whom he at last accompanied to Ireland as private secretary. The past came back so vividly, that one could almost see Dr. Johnson mounting the old staircase of the inn, and breakfasting voraciously, while Goldsmith sipped his sassafras,[1] and Boswell's pencil ran. These are said to have been amongst the thoughts that rose while Burke paced the worm-eaten floor of the priest's room at Nymphsfield.[2]

[1] Goldsmith's insatiable love of this old fashioned decoction from *Laurus* bark is shown in the perpetual charge for 'sassafras' made in the bills of his landlady, and which Mr. Forster prints in the ninth chapter of his 'Life.'

[2] Johnson and Boswell are found in these parts in 1776. Of one of the inns we read, 'It was so bad, sir, that—Boswell wished to be in Scotland.'—*Life of Dr. Johnson*, ch. lvi.

Why his eyes remained closed while he preached to the people, puzzled them. But a passage in one of his sermons makes it clear:

> If any one amongst us wishes to think profoundly, he shuts his eyes. The greatest poets that the world has seen were blind men, for poetry is the creative power by which every faculty of the soul, gathered into itself and concentrated in itself, afterwards pours out by the tongue or the pen its own richness.[1]

Week after week Burke opened Divine service in the quaint old house that he christened 'the Cathedral.' Rustic penitents, who confessed in a dialect which would have bothered Mezzofanti, were consoled and shriven. He fed them with the Bread of Life, and afterwards helped to trim their cottage fires, while, like the *Soggarth Aroon*,[2] he entered into their domestic joys and sorrows.

Though most of the bishops at the Council of Trent believed in the Immaculate Conception, they hesitated to define it further than a declaration that while the whole human race fell under original sin, they did not intend to include the immaculate Virgin Mary. In 1849, Pius IX. addressed a letter to every Catholic bishop in communion with Rome, asking for a statement of opinion on the expediency of defining the question as doctrine. Nearly five hundred Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese prelates approved. Many bishops of France and Germany, and even Archbishop Murray of Dublin, deemed the time inopportune. The question has always had much interest for Dominicans, and at Woodchester it was frequently discussed. Gregory XV., when forbidding, in 1622, any one to maintain even in private that the Blessed Virgin had been conceived in original sin, allowed this privilege to the Dominicans, provided that they confined to their own Order the expression of adverse views. Fr. Burke, in a lecture on Pius IX., remarked:

[1] Charity sermon for St. Joseph's Blind Asylum, Dublin, May 20, 1877.
[2] *Anglicè*—the darling priest.

I once said to a poor peasant in the west of England, 'Do you think the Pope will declare the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary?' 'Whether he does or not,' was the answer, 'we know it is the truth, and when the time comes he will know better than any one else.' In these words he showed that he knew this great attribute of the Pope.

On December 8, 1854, Pius IX., attended by two hundred bishops, defined the Immaculate Conception as an article of faith. Meanwhile quieter doings were in progress at Woodchester.

The rural stroll covering the distance from the monastery to Fr. Burke's spiritual charge (resumes Fr. Stapelton's MS.), all equipped as he was for a night's stay, as each Saturday came round, finally became quite an occasion of leavetaking. It was known that the Father Master of the Novices would not be back for a week or more. Now, what could detain him amongst a handful of Catholics —perhaps less than thirty? The fact was that there resided, or existed, a Most Reverend Archbishop at Mr. Leigh's house, who, having experienced a stroke of paralysis while on a passing visit *en route* to his diocese of Corfu, had remained as a heavy but an honourable charge in Mr. Leigh's hands. A pitiable cripple the good prelate certainly was, who simply might be said to be vegetating, for, by degrees, every member of his body seemed to be attacked by the creeping malady he endured. Archbishop Nicholson was from the North of Ireland, and his attachment to Father Burke and our dear Father Master's love for the decrepit and helpless prelate were most admirable. In short, Fr. Tom Burke became the Archbishop's secretary, and this was no sinecure, as even the novices found out by degrees. With the pliability of genius, Burke fitted in anywhere, and already his duties were multitudinous. Fr. Prior Aylward, too, was anxious that the talent he so readily discovered in Fr. Burke should find its legitimate issue. And, notwithstanding all his engagements, he informed Burke at last that really he must preach, and that in the church too. Hitherto a few homely but very beautiful discourses to his smallest of all small flocks at Nymphsfield had simply made Mr. and Mrs. Leigh quite happy, and, no doubt, had much 'quickened'—as the phrase goes—their spiritual being. But now, at last, Fr. Tom Burke's turn for the pulpit was to assume its right direction and proportion. And on the given Sunday, much to the intense curiosity and interest of at least three Oxford M.A.s, who resided at Woodchester, Fr. Thomas

Burke was to preach his first sermon. Was it possible? Yes, Fr. Thomas trembled like an aspen leaf. He was as pale as a sheet, and his voice even faltered, but lo! gradually it grew in bulk, though at no time could it be said to have really filled the little priory church. And more than all, while several of the audience seemed spell-bound, Fr. Thomas Burke never moved a muscle. At length—but yet much too soon—the sermon was over, and the Mass was resumed, as it was, of course, the usual Sunday morning *inter sacra*; Mr. Matthew Bridges, M.A., coming afterwards to thank Prior Aylward for the immense treat that he had had. We never remembered to have heard a better in our church.[1]

Mr. Bridges was a retired barrister, whose love of eloquence had been fanned by Brougham, Ellenborough, Erskine, and Eldon, and he was one of the first to recognise the power of Edward Irving when he began to preach in Hatton Garden. He seems to have been the representative of Robert Bridges, who, in 1722, bequeathed 500*l.* for clothing and educating the little boys of Woodchester. Mr. Matthew Bridges took an hereditary interest in the place; and, as Fr. Paul Stapelton states, called upon Prior Aylward to congratulate him on his promising son. He next sought and cultivated the acquaintance of Fr. Burke. One day Burke conveyed to Mr. Bridges the welcome news that a great ecclesiastical light from the University of Turin had been appointed by the Master-General Regent of Studies at Woodchester. This was Dr. Pozzo, and both went to meet him on the evening of his arrival at Stroud. But Dr. Pozzo's appearance was so peculiar, and he made so bad an attempt to speak English, that the old critic, whispering Fr. Burke, said, 'Poor prospect for a preacher, sir.'

But Pozzo could practise very much to the purpose; and, strengthened by a great prestige, he soon won golden opinions by his wisdom as a spiritual adviser, and by the ease with which he could unravel the most intricate questions of moral and dogmatic theology.

[1] MS. Recollections of the Very Rev. Paul Stapelton, O.P., communicated to the Author, August 29, 1884.

Fr. Burke chose Dr. Pozzo as his confessor. The lips of the Director must always remain inviolably sealed, but the penitent is free to tell all that passes between the confessor and himself. Our young preacher reproached himself with having felt an emotion of vanity on a recent occasion when his sermon had proved a success. He described to his English novices—now eminent Fathers—the pain with which he saw a ripple of contempt play across Dr. Pozzo's face. 'What,' exclaimed the Regent, 'vain of that poor shambling thing!'—and he then went on to point out its defects with such acumen that it crushed for ever, Fr. Burke added, all possible germs of professional vanity. Henceforth he went to confession before delivering his sermons, 'simply to keep himself straight.'

Fr. Burke was the reverse of handsome, and he constantly made jokes at the expense of his own face. 'I took a rise out of Dr. Pozzo in return,' he said. 'I conveyed to him soon after that I was vain of my looks.' He added that this time Pozzo placed his hand all over his mouth, as though trying to hide a laugh of derision, and which he thought would prove a searing touch of caustic to cure the raw vanity of a boy.[1]

One day, when Fr. Burke was mimicking some well-known characters, Dr. Pozzo said, 'Could you mimic me?'

Pozzo was a podgy man. He is described as carrying himself like a bundle of rags, and walking in a peculiar way. Fr. Burke, tucking up his habit, at once stumped across the room, inhaling a prolonged pinch of imaginary rappee. Everybody felt that the thing was done to the life.

Dr. Pozzo, as Regent of Studies, had introduced 'Defensios,' or circles. On a certain St. Patrick's Day the subject of the 'Defensio' was the apostle of Ireland. The conflict went on with much spirit, until, coming near the

[1] Fr. Burke was probably joking when he told this, but the anecdote furnishes an illustration of his humour.

end, Fr. Burke ventured to say to the austere Father Vicar, that, in honour of the day, the combatants ought to be provided with shillelaghs and potheen. The 'Defensio' was, of course, all in Latin, and the chief humour of the joke lay in the learned language in which it was clothed. It does not appear that the Vicar smiled; but the Regent of Studies, like most Italians, thoroughly understood a joke, and at once led the way for the laugh which was ready to burst out around.

Under Fr. Burke, his English novices acquired not only a thorough knowledge of their Rule, but of Irish humour as well. It was, indeed, a more than fortuitous arrangement which placed under his influence those whose future work was chiefly among the Irish in the great towns of England. To the end of his life he spoke with delight of the affection he experienced from those who had been his English novices.

Describing Bishop Moriarty's theological course, Fr. Burke realised his idea of what the young Levite ought to be, and the picture seems a reflex. 'Like the young St. Thomas of Aquin, he was a modest youth, not inclined to assert or vindicate his own opinions, but, when occasion demanded, pouring forth with easy and commanding eloquence the ample resources of a richly stored mind.' [1]

From these possibly tedious tracings of ours, the reader will again gladly turn to the genial recollections of Fr. Paul Stapelton, O.P., kindly written for this work:

But now, was the Master's own time of probation over, that he could so lord it over his novices? Evidently not, as Father Burke's promotion to office had been premature; he had yet to fill the time of his curriculum as a student. And the time and opportunity came. Father Master Pozzo and a young lector had arrived at Woodchester and instituted a college of theological studies. And at the making of the college, as its earliest student, together with Fr. Damian Borgogna, Fr. Thomas was enlisted.[2] In spite of his other work, he

[1] In the Cathedral, Killarney, Oct. 8, 1877.

[2] The Rev. T. Borgogna, now of the Convento Domenicano, Corbara,

was informed that he must consider himself a formal student, bound over to read up and take his degree within a twelvemonth. To any one else this would have been a cause of exemption from novitiate cares, and by anyone else time would have been economised for closer study, till, as the day approached for the ordeal of a public 'Defensio,' agitation would have left its traces upon every feature, and fever heat would have set in. But not at all. Fr. Thomas seemed unconcerned. Reading he was fond of; but how he got his theology in between the mass of English light literature he devoured I could not say. Was it at nights?—and where? In fact, he was seldom seen with the 'Summa' in hand, except when going to class. Yet Fr. Master Pozzo had never to complain of his student. Fr. Thomas invariably knew his lesson, and often word for word by heart, as is customary. Here were evidences of extraordinary talent. Fr. Master Pozzo could trust his man, with whom at times he could not compare in argument himself. Suffice it to say that the curriculum was over. Such was his confidence that he felt no difficulty, as the Regent of the Studies, to make a public announcement that Father Thomas would defend Theses *in universa theologia* against all comers. Then indeed, till within a few weeks of the appointed day, Fr. Thomas began to look serious and preoccupied, and especially by the arrival at Woodchester of eminent professors from all quarters. A great tournament might be expected.

With clothes that hung about him as though they had been thrown on a hat-stand, Br. Thomas, on appearing some time before at the head of his novices, quite looked the character of Dominie Sampson; and one cannot doubt, from the innate humour of the man, that he strengthened the resemblance by imparting to his face a vacant expression. Great, therefore, was the surprise with which Fr. Augustine viewed the sudden outburst of his genius. Fr. Paul Stapelton continues:

It is curious to recall the names of the visitors and competitors or disputants in Woodchester Church on this memorable and indeed unique occasion. The disputants were Father Gastaldi, of the Order of Charity (afterwards the illustrious Archbishop of Turin, and one

Corsica, studied with Fr. Burke at Perugia, and afterwards at the Minerva, Rome. He accompanied him to S. Sabina, and followed him to Woodchester. Fr. Borgogna is the best witness of Burke's inner life when in Italy.

of the greatest lights of the Vatican Council); Fr. Jones, S.J., of St. Bueno's, N. Wales; Father Christie, of Farm Street; the late Canon Williams, of Clifton; and Fr. Raphael, of the Passionist Order; while in the well-attended circle figured Mgr. Howard (now the eminent Cardinal Bishop of Frascati), Fr. H. Vaughan (the indefatigable Bishop of Salford), and Bishop Ullathorne, O.S.B. This experienced and venerable prelate was the President of the Discussion, which in its vigour at one time quite reminded him, as he said, 'of a Balaclava charge.' Fr. Master Pozzo, O.P., supported his brilliant student, and no doubt was proud, as indeed we all were, of the ability, the readiness, the good Latinity (a matter Fr. Prior Aylward, then his superior, so much admired as a scholar himself), and the nice patient civility of our noble representative, as he bowled over every objection with marvellous dexterity and good humour. This wrung from the Benedictine bishop a prophetic speech; for he assured us that this most creditable display of theological acumen and strict scholastic form and dialects would strike a chord that must reverberate through the length and breadth of the land, and would be responded to and re-echoed in other climes. How this has been fulfilled the Catholic world can answer. It was the tribute of a prelate of universal fame to a simple friar, over whose tomb might be written the Apostolic dictum—that the sound of his voice has gone throughout the world.[1]

The date of the tournament was August 3, 1854. On that day Burke passed his examination as a Lector of Theology. There were three Lectors present, who had each five votes; and it is curious to see how the voting went. For conduct Burke got thirteen out of fifteen votes; while in 'Scientia,' or knowledge, he got only ten out of the fifteen. Fr. Borgogna, whose answering was far inferior to Fr. Burke's, got higher votes. All this transpires on consulting the original record at Woodchester. There is a faint tradition that Dr. Pozzo, whom Burke had mimicked, may have allowed himself when voting to be moved by pique, but inquiry has satisfied us that

[1] Fr. Jones, S.J., ever after entertained an affectionate admiration for Fr. Burke, whose pre-eminence as a preacher, writes Rev. Matthew Russell, S.J., 'I heard Jones attribute in part to his consummate knowledge of the "Summa" of St. Thomas.'

he would be quite incapable of it. One of the voters was Dr. Utili, who informed us that the Regent of Studies felt that Burke, instead of giving his time to the acquisition of knowledge, frittered it away at his small mission and in telling stories to Archbishop Nicholson. He held that no man, unless a second Thomas Aquinas, ought to get the full number of votes to which a voter is entitled. Dr. Pozzo gave Burke two blacks in the voting, Dr. Utili two more, and the austere Fr. Augustine gave one. The entry recording the result is signed: 'Aug. Pozzo, S.T. Mag. et Reg.' Minor or weekly 'Defensios' had been previously held, and the name of Thomas Burke uniformly received honourable record. How he answered so brilliantly puzzled them, for he seemed never to prepare. They did not know that he had already learned by heart, in Rome, almost the entire 'Summa.'

At last the Archbishop of Corfu died—some said, but untruly, in a fit of laughter induced by one of Fr. Tom's stories, and he was ordered to preach the funeral discourse, although Dr. Pozzo, previous to it, rather disconcerted the young preacher by warning him to avoid much panegyric. The sermon is well remembered as one of rare power. The Archbishop had been a Carmelite, and this afforded good scope for praise of the religious life. The remains were consigned to the crypt of Woodchester Church, and a monument was soon after raised to his memory. Here several members of the Leigh family also repose.

We have already seen how Burke's feelings revolted when compelled to beat carpets with 'Georgius Rex.' Another duty required both to feed the furnace which blazed in the crypt; and our Dominican in his snow-white robe is next found discharging the *rôle* of a stoker. But even here—down among the dead, so to speak—his cheerfulness well sustained him; for while his features, bronzed by the red glare, twisted about in divers shapes, he greatly amused

Georgius by producing on the wall of the crypt shadows of weirdly suggestive outline. To this youth, now a highly distinguished Father, Burke was greatly attached ; and he it was who would hold up the caricature cartoons while the Master of Novices shaped his own face after the model.

'I had to light two fires before saying Mass, and had hardly time to wash my hands before going on the altar,' were among the recollections with which Fr. Burke interested his brethren at Tallaght.

We have seen how dissatisfied Dr. Pozzo was with Burke for spending so much of his time at Nymphsfield. The latter had found some gross cases of religious ignorance ; and among the most obstinate was that of a farmer who often fell into conversation with him.

Argument after argument, taken from Scripture and from his late studies, did Fr. Tom pour down this man's throat—and still no impression—when he was startled and not a little angered by the reply, 'Yea, friend, but be the Bible true?' Often afterwards were we told by Fr. Tom that when he came to England from Rome he could not have believed it possible that such an observation could have been made in this 'enlightened' country. Suffice it to say, that really he was too disconcerted to 'settle' the farmer on the spot ; but eventually he sought another and better interview, and laid the seeds of a complete Christian training in him and others, with a previous groundwork of the necessary existence of God, and who He was, and what He had done.[1]

Some hours were also given to the society of 'Squire Leigh,' and much interest was awakened by Fr. Burke's vivid exposition of points in ecclesiastical history not as yet fully clear to the distinguished convert. Mr. Leigh was a strong Tory in politics; and from him Fr. Burke first imbibed certain Conservative tendencies, never entirely relinquished.

In Mr. Leigh's house was found, after Fr. Burke had left Nymphsfield for ever, some 'Thoughts' in the handwriting of

[1] MS. Recollections of Rev. Paul Stapelton, O.P., August 7, 1884.

the young Dominican, and designed to guide and guard him in his now increased exposure to the dangers and temptations of the world. This remarkable document—one very much in the spirit of Job's compact with his eyes 'never to think on a virgin'—will be found in our Appendix.

The people of Nymphsfield, being nearly all Anglicans and Dissenters, required information on some controverted points, and Fr. Burke satisfied that desire. When the preacher was one day on his way home, a gentleman said, 'Sir, I cannot agree with you in your devotion to the Virgin; and I object to the monotony of your Hail Marys.' 'What will you do when obliged to sing Holy, Holy, Holy, for all eternity?' replied Burke, and the good humour of the response made both good friends.[1]

After the broadside which he discharged at Messina he came to be familiarly known by the nickname 'Long Tom,' in allusion to the famous piece of ordnance.

One day an incident occurred to which reference is made in a sermon preached at Brooklyn, U.S., on May 5, 1872. After showing the beneficial action of the confessional on society and its importance in restraining theft, he asks:

> How is it that Protestant employers and masters are so anxious to have Catholic servants, Catholic apprentices, Catholic helps about them? Because they are shrewd enough to know that the confessional which they despise creates honesty and enforces it. There is no stronger way to enforce honesty than to get a man to believe that he cannot live without Jesus Christ, and that Jesus Christ is on the altar waiting for him; to tell him that between him and the Saviour stands a barrier that he must overcome if he turns dishonest, and that barrier he cannot pass without restoring to the last farthing whatever he has unjustly got; to tell him that if he becomes a thief—public or private—the accumulation of his thievery will build up an impenetrable wall between him and God; and that, until that wall is pulled to pieces by restitution, he never can approach the sacraments here nor the glory of God hereafter. An English Protestant clergy-

[1] Fr. Burke to Rev. F. A. Hickey, O.P.

man came to me once, when I was on the English mission, and he said, 'Father, I come to complain of one of my man-servants.' 'Well, sir,' I replied, 'what have I to do with your servants?' 'Oh,' he said, 'all my servants are Catholics, and I would not think of employing anybody else.' 'What complaints,' I said, 'have you to make of them?' 'Well,' he said, 'I insist on their going to confession once a month, and this man has not been there for months. So I came here to insist on his going.' 'Well, but you do not believe in it?' 'No,' he said, 'I cannot say that I believe in it; but so long as my Catholic people go, they will not steal from me, and so long as they do not go to confession and communion they will not receive any wages from me.'

And Fr. Burke then went on to show the great agency which touches vice and creates honesty.

In September 1854, the rigid Fr. Vicar was removed from Woodchester to Hinckley, Leicestershire.[1] Cardinal Wiseman had long desired that the Dominicans should undertake the Kentish Town mission, London. He had known Fr. Burke in Rome; and if a special invitation once reached the young friar preacher, it would not have been easy to decline it. Dr. Russell, then head of the Irish Dominicans, wishing to utilise Fr. Burke's talents for his own province, called him home to found a novitiate and House of Studies. 'We parted,' writes Fr. Paul Stapelton; 'but it might well be said that so deeply had Fr. Burke made his mark at Woodchester, that to this day his very form seems familiar, and time cannot obliterate either his presence or his work.'

[1] We are unwilling to take leave of Fr. Augustine without recording the testimony of Fr. Towers, now Provincial of the Irish Dominicans, who served as a priest under him. Fr. Towers—himself an Irishman—assures us that he received more paternal kindness from this cold Saxon Vicar than at the hands of many Irish Superiors to whom he was afterwards subject.

CHAPTER V.

AT TALLAGHT.

DURING the bitter time of penal laws and persecution, the Irish Dominicans always maintained their ground (writes their Provincial, Fr. Towers), and many a martyr and confessor of their order are witnesses of the hard battle they fought. The convents of Italy, Spain, Portugal, and France received generously the youth who presented themselves for the Irish mission. In course of time three colleges were endowed even for the sole education of Irish Dominicans—San Clemente, Rome; Holy Cross, Louvain; and Corpo Santo, Lisbon. At the close of the last century the French Revolution swept away Holy Cross; the continuance of Corpo Santo became inexpedient. San Clemente only remained, but its limited revenue, and the premonitory symptoms of the changes which afterwards occurred in Rome, prevented the Irish Fathers from trusting to it exclusively to recruit the ranks of their province. It was determined to open a novitiate at home.

Years after the great Dominican spoke of the need of entering with thorough earnestness into 'the great work,' as he says, 'of preparing Levites for the sanctuary—a succession of the good and faithful priesthood who from the days of Patrick have been the best beloved, as they were the truest servants of the Irish race.' He well knew

how careful must be the training of him whose feet are to tread in the sanctuary, and whose hands are to touch the Lord. The legend of St. Nennius of the Clean Hand, who, when he heard as a child that he was one day to be a priest, wrapped up his right hand so as never to touch anything until the day of his anointing, was a beautiful symbol of the mind of the Church, who seeks in her ministers virgin souls in virgin bodies.[1]

[1] Sermon in the Cathedral at Killarney, Oct. 7, 1877. [From orig. MS.]

To promote these great ends the house and demesne of Tallaght had been bought for a novitiate. Describing it in 1883, Fr. Burke said: 'At the foot of the hills, which go on increasing in grandeur and beauty until they are lost to view, there is a place most ancient in Ireland's history.'[1] It had been already familiar to Burke through the early bard of his choice—Davis—who, in his 'Landmarks of Border Raid,' invests it with deep interest. But Tallaght was paved with historic memories from Partholan and his hosts 2,800 years before Christ, to Angus the Culdee and St. Melruan, both of whom compiled the 'Martyrology' of Tallaght, an ancient Irish MS. now preserved in the Burgundian Library at Brussels. In the eighth century St. Melruan—styled the bright sun of Ireland—rebuilt the monastery of Tallaght, and diffused through the religious houses of Ireland 'peace, piety, and plenty.'

This went on for several hundred years (records Fr. Burke), and then the Irish monks died away, and others, strangers indeed by birth, but still brothers by faith—the Canons Regular of St. Augustine—came to the sacred house at Tallaght, sang the praises of God, and preached His Word unchanged, as I preach it to-day. Then came another change for Tallaght, and the place passed from the monks to the Archbishops of Dublin. They loved the place, and they brought with them their priests and canons; and the same Word continued, and the same praise went on, and the same worship sanctified the spot.

Fr. Burke then referred to the Reformation—how the Protestant archbishops took possession of Tallaght, and how great cruelties were performed on its hallowed ground.[2]

In 1729 the ruling prelates built a castellated residence here with the *débris* of the more venerable pile; and it continued to be occupied by their successors until Archbishop Magee, authorised by Parliament, sold the demesne to Major Palmer,

[1] Sermon at St. Xavier's, Liverpool, April 8, 1883.

[2] Open-air Discourse of Fr. Burke at Tallaght on the occasion of laying the corner stone of his new church there, Oct. 1, 1882.

one of the conditions being that he should demolish the palace 'lest it should ever thereafter become a monastic institution.' The covenant was strictly observed, and the task of removing the ruins occupied three years. 'No wonder the new archbishops tired of it,' continues Fr. Burke. 'There were memories round the spot—there were voices in the air—voices of ancient saints and holy ones—that made them rest uneasily upon their beds of down.'[1]

The vicissitudes of Tallaght at last culminated in a mortgage, and the place passed into the hands of Mr., now Sir John, Lentaigne, C.B., who leased the greater portion of the demesne to the Dominicans for 999 years. 'They got hold of the spot sanctified by centuries of prayer and martyrs' blood, and again erected the cross where the upas tree had been planted.'[2]

On the site of the castle they built their monastery; the stable in which the archiepiscopal stud so long found luxurious mangers having been converted into a modest chapel, thus bringing Tallaght back to its original state, and verifying Byron's apothegm that 'time at last makes all things even.'

On Fr. Burke's arrival in 1855, he surveyed with interest in the priory grounds some relics of the past, including a huge walnut tree, traditionally said to have been planted by St. Melruan's hand, and which, though riven to the earth by the great storm of 1839, still yields its fruit. Another object was the tower—used as a belfry to this day—originally part of the palace of Dr. De Bicknor, who from 1317 to 1349 ruled as Archbishop of Dublin.

Fr. Burke liked his change of residence. Seven miles away Dublin unfolds its length like a monster map. Mounting to an adjacent pinnacle, he could view the fine pro-

[1] Open-air Discourse of Fr. Burke at Tallaght on the occasion of laying the corner stone of his new church, Oct. 1, 1882.

[2] Sermon at the Jesuits' Church. Liverpool, April 1883.

spect, which stretched from Taney Hill to Ireland's Eye; from the Phœnix Park to the Plains of Meath; from the Three Rock Mountain to the Hill of Lyons; the intervening valleys 'with verdure clad' (the name of a sacred song specially familiar to him) brightened the view. Thinkers who heard him preach at Tallaght in after years were struck by the contrast between the grandeur of the sermon and the meanness of the structure in which it was delivered. The fact of its having been originally a large stable was not without its uses and suggestiveness to one who loved to preach upon the lowly birth at Bethlehem.

The glory of Ireland's priesthood, the glory of St. Columba (he once said), the glories of Iona and Lindisfarne, weigh upon me with a tremendous responsibility, to be of all other men what the Irish priest and monk must be, because of that glorious history; the glory of the battle that has been so long fighting and is not yet closed.

In the peaceful seclusion of Tallaght, Fr. Burke found leisure not only to lay up a store of learning, but to cultivate his gifts of speech. He preached in season and out of season, and practice makes perfect. Time was when, as Dalton records, 'the O'Tooles invaded and devastated Tallaght with deadly enmity and destruction;'[1] and the pupil of Dr. O'Toole was not the man to be unmoved by such memories. Burke's fame soon spread beyond the Dublin Ridge, and crowds of rude mountaineers—the descendants of the race just named—instead of coming down in avalanches as of yore, rushed for shrift and sermon.

[1] With something of the surprise that one would view a troop of Red Branch Knights march down Cork Hill, Dublin, people read of renewals of the old conflicts between the O'Tooles and the Palesmen, and which became at last the subject of judicial inquiry at Tallaght. The *Irish Times* announced 'desperate faction fighting near Tallaght between the inhabitants of Crumlin, &c. &c., on one side and the mountain men on the other.' Constable Burke deposed that 'over 100 people were injured in one of these fights; numbers from the mountains have been assaulted on their way home from Dublin owing to the bad feeling promoted by these fights.'

Speaking of the relief that confession brings, he told the following incident from his own experience:

I remember a man coming to me to confession once—a big, strapping, whole-souled Irishman, of six feet two—and when he finished his confession and got up from his knees, he did this [here the lecturer threw his hands above his head and stretched himself to his full height]. 'Just look here, your reverence, look at me. Did you see that stretch?' 'I did.' 'That was more than I was able to do at all when I came in.' If there be any Catholics amongst you who neglect this sacrament; if there be any Protestant friends amongst you who do not believe in it, tell me, my friends, is it any great advantage to you to be carrying your harrowing secrets to the grave? Is it any advantage to you—humanly speaking—to bear this incrustation of sin and remorse, when before you is a man—his Divine commission in his hand, and Christ himself at his side—saying, 'Whose sins you shall forgive upon earth shall be forgiven in heaven'?[1]

In a region where the Hell-fire Club had once held its orgies his lot was now cast. Hardened consciences melted before the fire of his eloquence. He well knew his own strength, and felt that a day might come when he should be called upon to exert it widely in bringing souls to God, pleading the cause of the orphan, and in refuting error. In anticipation of such a call, he daily drew aliment from the tomes of ripe scholarship that, like the trees laden with generous fruit, stood around him. The Fathers and the Chroniclers, the poets and the essayists, all placed their treasures before him; for, like the Jesuits, and unlike 'the only form of religious life recognised up to the sixteenth century, when its course of studies was rigidly confined to sacred subjects,' he strengthened his mind with general literature.[2] The result was that, when the hour for action came, it found a battery fully mounted. This discloses one of the causes of his marvellous success in America, where,

[1] Lecture on 'The Harmony of Catholic Worship,' at Boston, U.S., Sept. 25, 1872.

[2] 'St. Ignatius and the Jesuits,' a Sermon, July 31, 1880.

often without a minute's preparation, he poured broadside after broadside into seemingly impregnable positions.

In 1855 he was asked to assist in conducting a mission at the adjacent parish of Crumlin. The chapel was old and primitive; his audience were rude and unlettered, but he prepared as carefully, and addressed them with as much ardour, as though they were the congregation of a cathedral. The 'P.P.' nicknamed him Savonarola, and said that a great light had once more risen amongst the Dominicans.

During the year 1857 Fr. Burke took part in a mission at Rathfarnham. 'His companions in arms,' as he called them, were Dr. Carbery, now Bishop of Hamilton, his early patron, Fr. Rush, and the Very Rev. J. T. Towers. Here he also won golden opinions. But so retiring was the man that during the few years that elapsed between the missions and his great sermon at Sandymount, we find him labouring chiefly with his novices or reclaiming rustic sinners.

Twenty-seven years ago a Fr. Daly, C.C., of Rathfarnham, was much beloved. Ultimately his health broke down. He was sent to Rome, and again to Australia, where he died. During the mission at Rathfarnham, Fr. Daly, then a languid invalid, drove up, and Burke went out to the old-fashioned covered car in the chapel-yard to rally him. Fr. Daly was much depressed on viewing the scene of his former labours. Burke said: 'Fr. Daly, you are not forgotten; ever since we came to this mission your name is in every mouth; the whole congregation, even the little children, are repeatedly talking of you. There, they are at it now. Come over.' He helped the sick man from the car to the chapel porch, where his ears were greeted with the well-known hymn, commencing, 'Daily, daily,' &c. 'There they go,' said Fr. Burke, 'shouting out for you from morning till night.' 'Thus,' adds our informant, 'dear, good-natured Fr. Burke sought to bring back the long-absent smile to the poor sufferer's face, and certainly succeeded.'

At Tallaght, we are told, 'not less by reason of the lofty intellect which commanded admiration than by the sweetness of his nature, he enjoyed the respect and affection of all with whom he came in contact.'

Among those who knew him best at this time was the Very Rev. G. D. Power.

Having been an old and intimate friend of Fr. Burke (he writes), I take the liberty of sending a few reminiscences. I was his novice for two years, was a member of the community of San Clemente during his Priorship there, was constantly his companion while in Rome, and for many years enjoyed his familiar intercourse and confidence both in Italy and Ireland.

Some of the details thus inclosed illustrate a more advanced period of our narrative; the following concerns this page. It may be premised that the habit was restored to the Irish Dominicans in 1852. An order from Fr. White, then Visitor-General of the Irish Province, made it obligatory to wear it:

I was one of four young boys from the city of Cork who entered the novitiate of St. Mary's, Tallaght, in 1857. Fr. Burke was the Master of Novices. I can never forget the impression his ascetic appearance made upon me as he entered the parlour to see the postulants for the Order. His tall, graceful, and attenuated figure, clad in his white habit, his stern, rigid face, shaded by the cowl which he wore over his head, his hands folded under his scapular, and the deep, sonorous voice—sepulchral in its tone—all presented to my youthful gaze the living image of a vigorous, ascetic Dominican monk. That figure might have stepped down from one of the pictures of Fra Angelico's groups of saintly Dominicans which hung upon the walls of that reception room I was frightened. He looked the very personification of the austerity and rigour of the Order of St. Pius V., Saint Louis Bertrand, and Vincent Ferrar. On our way up to the novitiate he turned quietly round to the thinnest lad in the group, and said, 'My boy, we must feed you.' This touch of humanity and humour softened me a little. The present Bishop-Auxiliary of Cork, the Right Rev. F. H. O'Callaghan, was one of that group. In the observances of the rigid rule of the

Order, in the abstinences, fasts, and mortifications of the religious life, he was always the most observant and rigid of the community. He might have been one of the monks of San Marco in Florence, under the priorship of Fra Jerome Savonarola. In all the recreations of the novices he was playful, buoyant, and enthusiastic. With the avidity and *abandon* of his simple, sportive nature, he would join in our out-door games of 'hurly,' football, and handball, and be as jubilant in victory or depressed by defeat as the youngest among 'his boys,' as he used to call his novices.

The 'ferverinos' or homilies which Fr. Burke daily addressed to his novices were masterpieces of touching eloquence. Neophytes are sometimes requested to preach sermons as a sample of their growing power. After the delivery of one, opinions were invited and given. 'It's all in Hay,' said one. 'It would be a long time there till you'd make a *suggawn* of it,' said Burke. It may be explained that Dr. Hay published an excellent volume of sermons, and that *suggawn* is the Irish for a hay rope.

A lay friend and near neighbour, who from the year 1855 to 1860 saw him daily, has committed to writing, at our request, his impressions of the man. These embrace no stirring incidents, and their value is derived from the accuracy with which his hidden life is reflected by—so to speak—a village photographer:

My own recollections of Fr. Burke go back to the time the Dominicans took up their abode at Tallaght. We lived there in a cottage hard by and saw a good deal of the Fathers. As time went on they accepted as novices a younger brother of mine, who died at Cork, and a sister, who is now with the Dominican nuns at Drogheda. We left Tallaght about 1870, and since then we rarely saw our old friends. Up to 1860 I saw him almost every day, sometimes several times during the day. A joyous, pure, and lofty spirit, simple and unaffected and sincere. He was wonderfully winning, and with a certain graciousness that had not a tincture of 'condescending' about it. He often reminded me of Curran. The low spirits, ill-health—again the high spirits and keen enjoyment of the bright moment—the flash from darkness to light—the shape of

the jaw, the mouth, the eyes (differing in colour, but Curran's glorious eyes were there), the stately flow of phrase and unstudied but 'speaking' gesture, the fearlessness, the love of the dear old land, purified, perhaps intensified, by his holy calling and exalted pursuits. The pall of 1817 fell again on Ireland in 1883.

At Christmas 1859, he had made a collection for the poor of the villages about Tallaght. He asked me to write out some names and assist him at the distribution. 'The wind of the word' was enough to attract a crowd. He managed tolerably well, but had to make raids more than once upon a small Reserve Fund. Business was disposed of very quickly, and with the dissatisfaction usual on such occasions. When Fr. Burke saw a poor woman moving off empty-handed, silent and sad, he called her and said, 'My child, *why* did you not come up?' 'Well, Father, I was afeared.' She had been famous for a propensity to share in any village row. Fr. Burke again retired and brought back a few shillings—wealth to the recipient. With these he bestowed a *very* few sweet kindly words—a couple of *seconds* did it all. She shook with emotion, and went her way; and I observed tears glittering in his dim eyes.

I was with him at a morning concert (his first) at the Rotunda in Grisi, Alboni, and Mário's time. We arrived early, and Fr. Thomas got into a great state of nervousness at finding no priest present. Time went on, still no priest. Fr. Thomas had serious notions of leaving, and seemed to have lost faith in my assurances that priests were always to be found at morning concerts. At length one arrived, then another, then two, three, and so on. He came from his 'stool of repentance' as he recognised some of them, and thenceforth gave himself up to enjoyment as thoroughly as a schoolboy on his holiday. He was amused that she—described in the bill as *Alboni*—should prove to be so stout.

Coming home that evening, he was full of the great vocalists, and gave snatches of the songs, with quaint imitations of the performers. After this he got a fancy to visit a 'horsemanship' exhibition, of which he knew nothing unless from pictures and placards on the walls. We arranged the day and hour some time before. I was embarrassed by his boyish eagerness, and had not the courage to refuse to be his companion, hoping, however, every day to hear him say that he could not go, or that somebody would tell him of the unfitness of such a place for him. To my delight, the evening before the great day I received the following characteristic note, covered with horrible faces and quaint marginal pen-and-ink devices:

S. Mary's, Tallaght:
Ye evening of Sunday.

DEAR RICHARD—I have received an unmistakable hint from 'a person in authority' that my appearance at the astounding circus to-morrow would not give unmixed satisfaction, so I must look upon it, as far as I am concerned, 'no go;' I am doomed to be unhorsed and left *hors de combat.*

I hope I have not put you out in any way. I shall be going in [to Dublin] as I said, and I'll call for you, so that part of our arrangement remains unhurt.

Be ready to join me, and mind to bring the price of a hat in your pocket, as if you went down to Galway in a jerry they'd be pressing you to accept of a hat, but your prospects would be ruined. I once heard a very respectable party in Galway express a decided objection to gentlemen in jerry hats.

Yours, till the night of my wake,
THOMAS BURKE, O.P.

'The very respectable party' was probably his mother. Some time after he visited me, it was one of his bad days, for his health was always treacherous. His spirits were much depressed, and a heavy languor seemed to double him up. He asked me to walk with him to the Convent, which I did, he leaning heavily on me. When we got there he asked me if I could run up in an hour or so, when his 'lecture' to his novices would be over. I promised I would if I could make time. I went up, and on my way heard shouting and laughing, and there was the Master of Novices in the midst of them joining in their 'recreation.' He had a short stick fighting for bare life to win the ball from one of the players, who was by no means disposed to let it go. Up and down, round and round they went, their habits tucked up and their wrists bleeding. It was about as droll a sight as I have ever witnessed, and when Fr. Thomas at length threw down his 'common' and came across to me, I was delighted to see that low spirits were over for that day at least.

His recovery from those fits of depression was generally rapid. After one of them I have seen him dancing down the stairs in his habit with all the airs and graces of wild girlhood, singing—

My mother has lots of old china,
And no fair heiress but me.

Men accustomed to matins find it second nature to rise early.

Before dawn I have been awakened by his voice outside my cottage singing Balfe's ballad. A *méchant* father had played a practical joke :

To his daughter's balcony he brought
Her monkey in muslins arrayed,
The youth was o'erjoyed, for he thought
'Twas the form of his beautiful maid.

But his inner life—as beautiful as that of his own St. Dominic—how shall that be described? To get full insight into it one should visit all the convents of his Order and see how his holy words have been cherished. His 'wit and humour' were almost involuntary scintillations, the bubbles of the brilliant well within—all his deeper thoughts he gave to Heaven.

Those gems of quiet domestication at Tallaght were not without spiritual advantage to him. A community life which absorbed a man into itself formed all his habits, fostered his virtues, corrected his faults, and surrounded him with all the helps and comforts of association and example. These were very nearly his own words.

Fr. Burke's boyish wish to see what a hippodrome was like leads us to say that, in point of fact, there was no more rigid stickler for ecclesiastical discipline than he, or one who appreciated more thoroughly the reforms which had just been introduced under the auspices of Archbishop Cullen. Years after he said, when preaching the praises of that Prelate :

The restoration of ecclesiastical discipline enforced by the decrees of Thurles, which in their turn were but a repetition of the mandates of the Council of Trent, involved some sacrifice on the part of the clergy ; the surrender of pleasures which, though innocent, were not priestly ; their greater withdrawal from the world, the daily and diligent exercise of prayer and study, the yearly exercises of retreat, their external habit and clothing—in a word, all that goes to make the holy priest and fitting minister of the dread altar of God.

It does not surprise us to hear from one of Fr. Burke's pupils that, 'unless at time of play, or on recreation days,

on which occasions a looker-on would be at a loss to know who amongst them was the Master, no one could be more strict or more severe, particularly if he saw the least deliberate neglect or violation of rule.'

He also took every opportunity of making his students humble (adds the Rev. J. P. Prendergast), and he would very often drop remarks hurtful to our feelings, and tell something before others calculated to raise a laugh at some poor fellow's expense; but if any one did laugh, or if any of the other students forgot himself for a moment, as by word or act to show that he was amused at the little humiliation of the other, then Fr. Burke was down on him in an instant, and would give him such a dressing; and all who knew Fr. Burke knew that he had a tongue which cut one through like a sword. Many a time would his hard words bring bitter tears from the poor fellow who was corrected; while in a few minutes afterwards they were all at play as though there was no difference between them.

On the evening before the first batch of students were to leave Tallaght for Rome, the Provincial, Fr. Russell, paid the students a visit, and wine was produced for the occasion. Fr. Russell, taking the glass of wine, said 'he drank the health of the future Priors and Provincials of the Province.' Immediately after he left. Fr. Burke returned to his students, and lest any little seed of vanity might have fallen from the Provincial's words, he said to them, 'Priors and Provincials, indeed! There is not a man amongst you that has either the brains or the piety to fit you for any position in the Order, and I doubt if you are even fit to be lay brothers.' Of these students one is now an Archbishop, and all, with one exception, have held positions of honour in the Order. His remark was in keeping with his own character for humility, as he had a most extraordinarily humble opinion of himself; indeed, if possible, he carried his humility to a fault.

Fr. Burke, in addressing his novices, felt that a few splashes of cold water make a strong man stronger.

Fr. Prendergast continues, after mentioning that Fr. Burke, notwithstanding his strictness, 'was very much beloved:'

When Fr. Burke's first batch of students were going from Tallaght to Rome in 1857, Fr. Folan, of Galway, who had been appointed Prior of San Clemente, accompanied them. On the recommendation

of the present Bishop of Hamilton, all went to an hotel in Trafalgar Square. Fr. Burke next day had an idea that the expenses might not be so reasonable as his Lordship had supposed, and so Fr. Folan asked for the bill. The result was a rapid retreat to a more handy and less costly hotel. Fr. Burke, as Master of Novices, went with the students as far as London, and one day took charge of them and brought them to see Whitehall. As is well known, two of the guards on horseback, glittering in their bright cuirasses and helmets, are always to be seen in the adjacent gateway on duty. On this day there was a splendid-looking fellow of colossal size, and Fr. Burke, to the amusement of several bystanders, proceeded to march the students before and beside him, unctuously describing and calling attention in the most marked manner to his grand proportions and accoutrements, flattering first to the individual himself, but at last rather calculated to provoke the big man to draw his sword. The shy novices would have given anything to get away; but no, his chest, his fine head, his feet, his calves, all must be admired—when suddenly we heard a shout and a loud whistle so commanding that even in the din of London it aroused us. Looking round, we saw the Prior's head frowning out of a four-wheeler, and his little finger in his mouth about to give another and more penetrative whistle to call our attention to the restraining influence of his presence.[1]

In London, Fr. Burke heard some distinguished Anglican divines preach. We learn from the secretary of the late Cardinal Cullen that one of the mimicries with which he used to amuse his Eminence was that of the late Bishop of Oxford. Fr. Burke, in two of his sermons, quotes Wilberforce. The higher the distinctions Burke acquired, the deeper sank his own humility. He maintained that grace and not knowledge was the subjugator of every evil passion:

Where shall we find the means of emancipating our will from passions and other bad influences (said Burke)? Will knowledge do it? No. Will faith do it? No. It is a strange thing to say, but knowledge, no matter how extensive or how profound, gives no command over the passions; no intellectual motives influence them. 'When you can moor a vessel with a thread of silk,' says a great orator, Dr. Wilberforce, 'then you may hope to elevate this human

[1] The letter of Rev. J. F. Prendergast, to the Author, St. Pancras, Lewes, March 4, 1884.

knowledge, and, by human reason, to tie down and restrain those giants—the passions and the pride of man.' I know as much of the law of God as any amongst you—more, probably, than many—for we are to teach. Does my knowledge save me from sin? Will that knowledge keep me in the observance of the sacred vows I took at the altar? Is it to that knowledge that I look for the power and strength within me to keep every sinful passion down in sacerdotal purity—of restricting every desire in monastic poverty—of keeping down every feeling of pride in religious obedience? I might know as much as St. Augustine, and yet be imperfect. It is the grace of God we need coming through fixed specific channels to the soul.

The feast of St. Dominic in 1857 was celebrated by a dinner at the old convent in Denmark Street, Dublin. The presence of two great hierarchs—Dr. Ryan, Bishop of Limerick, and Dr. Moriarty, Bishop of Kerry—tended to shed around some slight restraint, which the Prior tried to remove by calling upon Fr. Burke, who had hitherto comported himself with the modesty of a novice, to give the company one of his 'Imitations.' Italian priests, with a very limited knowledge of the English tongue, had become very popular as preachers in Ireland. The saintly Gentili was one; the burly Rinolfi another. Enormous audiences attended whenever the latter preached. Fr. Burke stood up and, for the first time, undertook to personate an Italian priest, lecturing the faithful in broken English. His first move was to cast with demonstrative vigour the folds of his robe from the dexter side right over the left shoulder. With finger upraised he began his performance by undertaking to answer Dr. Cumming, but whom he always spoke of as 'Doctor Cummingo.' He urged his hearers to avoid 'otiosity,'[1] to become tinkers, and reminded them that 'without face you cannot be shaved.' But when at the end of each objurgation the preacher, while seemingly trying to avert the doom which awaited sin, would say, '*You be* da—a—a—a—med,' the effect was irresistible;

[1] *Otiosus*, free from business.

old Bishop Ryan hardly liking to laugh outright at the phrase, but obliged to put his napkin to his mouth to conceal its expansion. The ice thus broken, a sociable evening was passed, and from that hour dated the commencement of the intimacy between Bishop Moriarty and Burke, which death alone dissolved.

This study he afterwards changed into that of an Italian Jesuit conducting a retreat for the English visitors at Rome. In this, Lazarus was spoken of as reposing in Abraham's womb.

About the year 1858 (writes Mr. Sherlock) I attended at a profession of nuns in the little convent chapel of Richmond Fairview. The fitting moment for the sermon had arrived, when a tall figure rose from its kneeling posture before the altar, and strode with quiet majesty to its appointed place on the platform. The figure was draped in the white and black of the Dominican habit. The sanctuary was filled with a dim religious light, which just revealed a tonsured head, fringed by a ring of thick black locks that surmounted a dark and sun-stained face, with features that were eloquent of strength and power, and with eyes that kindled into flame as their gaze seemed to centre upon the glories of an unseen world. The preacher spoke. The subject of his discourse was the religious life. The chapel was small, and his voice never rose above a whisper, but every whisper thrilled the nerves of his hearers. All were fascinated. He spoke of the beauty and purity and perfection of the religious life; he showed how it tended to raise man, even in the life below, almost to a level with the angels; he expounded with marvellous lucidity the meaning of the vows Religious take, and explained their bearing on the holy state; and with a fervid peroration that carried his hearers away from earthly things left them in earnest contemplation of a glorious future. It was no mere effort of polished rhetoric we heard on that occasion; no skilful weaving of brilliant phrases into rounded sentences such as may gratify the ear without ever reaching the heart. It was the full flow of an apostolic soul that came down on the congregation then assembled, and swept everything away on its irresistible tide. There were worldly men present, but the worldliest among them went along in silence, pondering upon the nothingness of his own pursuits. It was a sermon to make a scoffer stand self-condemned. It was a discourse that, being

heard, must be embedded in the memory for a lifetime. As the congregation slowly defiled out of the little chapel, the question was on every lip, 'Who was the preacher?' At length one was found to say, 'Fr. Burke—one of the Denmark Street friars.'[1]

This sermon—delivered in the private oratory of an obscure suburban convent—was, of course, never reported; and, except by those who chanced to be present, nobody ever heard of it. Such was its strength that for days after—as Mr. Sherlock assures us orally—he was torn by a strong desire to leave the world and become a monk.

Fr. Burke's antecedents had been so modestly veiled that Canon Dillon—the then chaplain to the convent—had never before heard of him, but he could not avoid exclaiming, 'He is the coming man.'

[1] Denmark Street had been the head-quarters of the Dominicans from 1780. The Friary stood within two minutes' walk of the Archbishop's parish chapel in Liffey Street—called the mensal parish, because it supported his *mensa* or table. Dr. Troy, himself a Dominican and a most influential Suffragan Bishop previous to his promotion to Dublin, is likely to have obtained for his late colleagues the privilege of opening this chapel almost at the gate of the Archiepiscopal church. The parochial clergy, like the friars, are dependent on eleemosynary support. Denmark Street Chapel is described by Cox's *Irish Magazine* for 1812 as the most fashionably attended place of Catholic worship in Dublin. The Order had previously passed through a highly chequered career. Associated with their monastery they opened, in 1428, a school of philosophy on the opposite side of the Liffey, and built the bridge connecting them known as 'Old Bridge.' It was the first of the six bridges across the Liffey, and De Burgo says that he remembers to have seen, in his youth, the font from which it was usual to sprinkle with holy water all who crossed it. The Provincial of the Irish Dominicans thus communicates to the present writer the sequel of their movements: 'After the courts of law were removed to the neighbourhood of Christ Church, our old monastery became the "King's Inns," and remained so until the building in Henrietta Street was completed; it was then demolished, and the present Four Courts erected on its site. Until the Reformation we always occupied the site given us by the Cistercians of St. Mary's Abbey. During the reign of James II. we had possession of our old house; in it was held the Parliament at which James presided. After the Revolution of 1688 our abode was in Cook Street, where we had a chapel; from thence, about the year 1740, we moved into Lower Bridge Street; in 1780 we changed to Denmark Street. Our old chapel in Bridge Street became the parochial church of St. Audeon's, and continued so until the present church in High Street was opened. The old building is still in existence—used as stores by Vance and Beers.' In 1786 Dr. Troy became Archbishop of Dublin. The first stone of the Pro-Cathedral in Marlborough Street was laid November 14, 1815. Liffey Street Chapel was soon after relinquished.

CHAPTER VI.

WORK IN IRELAND.

FIFTY years ago critics were fond of discussing the question why pulpit eloquence was so inferior to that of the senate or the bar. If Scotland could point to its Alison and Chalmers, it was submitted that they were not comparable to its Erskines and Broughams. 'In England,' asked Madden, 'where are we to look for divines, in the history of the last hundred and fifty years, who rival in oratory Bolingbroke, Chatham, Pitt, Fox, Burke, Sheridan, and Canning?'

The Catholic Church in the eighteenth century, fettered by penal bonds and fearful of arousing its persecutors to renewed vigilance and oppression, was not in a state to send forth pulpit orators of pretension. The only preacher who attained much distinction was Walter Blake Kirwan, a Franciscan friar, who afterwards joined the Established Church on the plea of obtaining more enlarged opportunities of doing good. Avoiding controversy, he generally preached on behalf of orphan charities. 'His irresistible powers of persuasion,' records his widow, 'often produced 1,200*l.* at a sermon, and his hearers sometimes threw in jewels or watches as earnest of further benefactions.' From the stories told of Kirwan's action in the pulpit it would appear that he did not deem divinity too high for dramatic treatment. His death, in 1805, was followed by a long pause in the oratory of the Protestant pulpit. In 1831 Dr. Whately arrived as Anglican Archbishop of Dublin. He had been thrice chosen 'Select Preacher to the University of Oxford,' and earned European fame, it was said, by his Bampton Lectures. But, notwithstanding the prestige

surrounding an Archbishop, we find James Grant writing of Whately in 1835 :

> Oratory is not his *forte*. He speaks in so low a tone as to be inaudible to those who are at any distance from him, and not only is his voice low, but it is unpleasant from its monotony. In his manner there is not a particle of life or spirit.

After the Catholic Church had lost Kirwan it no doubt found able exponents of its strength in Molloy, Clarke, Hayes, Beatagh, Keogh, Maguire, and Cahill. Molloy and Clarke —the latter a Dominican—died early in the century. Hayes was finally silenced for opposing with vehemence the Veto. Keogh outlived his fame and survived to 1833. Maguire was noted not for his eloquence, but for toughness of logic in polemic argument. Cahill, who latterly preached in a sitting posture, had many admirers, but after the death of Archbishop Murray his voice was never more heard in the metropolitan diocese. All these men, Cahill perhaps excepted, were forgotten when Burke's powers shone upon Dublin, and all were certainly inferior to him.

France may proudly point to Bourdaloue, Bossuet, and Massillon, and Italy to its Segneri; but a deep thinker who may be regarded as an expert in this line has shown that, high as these names stand, they are really below Burke's.

> I am about to be very bold—rash, perhaps—and to leave myself open to criticism (declares the Rev. Nicholas Walsh, a chief of the Jesuits), but the opinion is my own, founded, as I believe, on good and solid reasons. I believe that Fr. Burke, taking him for all in all, was the greatest, the most illustrious, and the most extraordinary preacher of whom we have any record. A study of the lives of great preachers of the time of Massillon, Bourdaloue, Bossuet, and Segneri, showed that they were men who either preached not often in the year, or who had abundance of time to prepare. They generally stood in the pulpit of some magnificent cathedral on some extraordinary occasion, amidst surroundings which stimulated and inspired. Some of them never preached under two months' notice ;

others, like Segneri and Bourdaloue, had their three months of unbroken retirement to prepare their Latin conferences. Others, like Massillon and Bossuet, could, from their very position, command their own time. To picture one of these illustrious preachers not only preaching often in his own church, but hurrying, for twenty-five years, through the length and breadth of the land, or of three lands, at the beck of every struggling nun and curate, bishop, parish priest, and charitable institution, preaching every Sunday and holiday—at times thrice a week, sometimes thrice a day—preaching often in old, uncomfortable, or new unfinished churches—with for nine long years an insidious disease torturing and wearing his life—such a picture of any of those illustrious preachers would be a caricature, because unreal. We read of nothing like this in the lives of those men, and yet we all know it to have been for years the life of Fr. Burke.

It is told in the diocese of Killaloe that Dr. Jeremiah Donovan, Domestic Prelate to Gregory XVI., was once invited by the pastor of Feakle to preach on the occasion of placing the organ in his church. A large audience assembled, but the new organ failed to arrive. Dr. Donovan had carefully prepared his sermon on church music and boldly delivered it, the absence of the instrument notwithstanding. When driving to Ennis that night his driver came violently into collision with some obstacle which proved to be the organ, and its *débris* was comically compared next day to 'organic remains.' Happily, no contrariety occurred to spoil the effect of the sermon which Fr. Burke had prepared in September 1859, on the occasion of opening the organ at St. Mary Star of the Sea, Sandymount.

An addition had been made to the interior adornments of the beautiful church (writes Fr. Nugent), and Dean O'Connell, its zealous pastor, was anxious that the occasion should be signalised by the delivery of a sermon by some preacher of note. He asked Fr. Eustace Murphy, another Dominican, to preach, but the good Father, having other engagements to fulfil, was obliged to decline. 'Will you get me a substitute, then?' said the priest. 'With pleasure,' was the reply; 'a young man shall be sent to you who can preach far better than I'

Neither the Dean nor his zealous coadjutor, Fr. David Mulcahy, were thoroughly satisfied with the arrangement, and their confidence in the result of the appeal was not strengthened by observing on entering the vestry a priest robed for the pulpit whose face seemed to them singularly vacant. There can be now no doubt that this was one of the freaks of facial distortion in which Burke sometimes indulged to puzzle people whose thoughts he read. He possessed the faculty, shared by Cardinal Cullen in a less comical degree, of assuming at times an appearance of stupidity. Perhaps both saw wisdom in Montaigne's precept, 'The best policy is to seem foolish and to act wisely.' That the first impression produced on Fr. Mulcahy was due to waggery on Burke's part is the more likely when we compare it with the account given of the way in which his majesty of aspect impressed all who heard his sermon at Fairview, and at a time when no prestige enshrined his name.

Fr. Burke ascended the pulpit at Sandymount (records a writer in the *Liverpool Times*), and, taking for his subject the intimate connection between art and the genius of the Catholic Church, preached a sermon in which eloquence, richness of imagery, originality of thought, and freshness of illustration were so charmingly combined that the congregation were rapt in wonder and delight. Fortunately there was a representative of the *Freeman's Journal* present, and next day the lengthy report which appeared in that widely circulating journal was perused with keen interest throughout the country.

After the sermon a person by no means rich said to Fr. Mulcahy, 'I came to give you one pound, but this man has knocked five out of me.'

The orator threw his whole heart into this sermon. Music at all times went to the depths of his very soul, and stirred every fine feeling and tender sympathy. Of Burke it might be said as of Byron, that he woke one morning to find himself famous.

Next day (writes Mr. J. R. O'Flanagan, who shares the warmth of

descriptive power possessed by the Irish Bar), Dublin was ringing with the account of the wonderful sermon preached at Sandymount. Never was anything finer. It equalled Massillon—it surpassed Bossuet—it rivalled Kirwan.

The reporter sent by Dr. Gray, the Dublin journalist, to Sandymount, was Mr. Frank Sullivan. His attention became at once so riveted, he tells us, that he made no attempt to report the eloquent preacher, but followed him from the vestry to the parish priest's door, and there ventured to explain his object. 'If you will take from under the folds of your habit the MS. of your sermon and kindly let me see it, the favour would be appreciated.' 'How do you know I have a MS.?' replied the Dominican. 'By the artistic and logical arrangement of your discourse.' 'But if I give you up my MS. what will St. Thomas say?' At last he smilingly surrendered it, saying, 'Twice to-day I have been made to stand and deliver;' and this is how so full a report appeared.

The fame of this sermon reached France; and the Père Mercier tells historically that it was 'dans un sermon prêché dans l'Eglise de l'Etoile de la Mer qu'il apparut pour la première fois ce qu'il devait être.'[1] The Very Rev. G. D. Power, Fr. Burke's former novice, writes to the same effect. Indeed, even most of the Fathers of his own Order in Ireland seem to have been quite unprepared for this success. But we now know on the authority of the men who worked with him in Gloucestershire that his sermons thus early were such that even old critics of the long robe called to congratulate his superiors on the marvellous eloquence of the young preacher. Cheerfully obeying the mandate which sent him 'to organise the novitiate' in Ireland, he relinquished, as it seemed, the *rôle* for which God and nature meant him, and to which passionate instinct—but not ambition—pointed. Speaking of the Sandymount sermon as 'his first great one,' Fr. Power adds:

I well remember how one afternoon he came to recreation with

[1] *L'Année Dominicaine*, p. 408.

the sermon he had prepared. Walking up and down the 'Friars' Walk,' a lovely shady avenue of the beautiful grounds at Tallaght, he read his sermon to the novices, stopping frequently to ask me or them 'if that would do,' and requesting suggestions. This was done in genuine simplicity and great humility. The beautiful story of the *Good Samaritan* was the gospel for the Sunday. I remember very vividly the application of the neighbourly and humane acts of the Samaritan, his pouring on the oil, and dressing the wounded man from Jericho, &c., to the action and inspiration of the Church in her use of music, to soothe, elevate, and spiritualise fallen human nature. The passages here were very fine, full of poetry, and suggestive of a high artistic culture. 'I believe they liked the sermon,' was his remark on his return from Sandymount, where he had preached; one which immediately placed him in the fore-front of pulpit orators.

Fragments from this sermon appear at pages 84 and 105. 'Ce fut pour tous, selon la parole du P. Lacordaire, le premier coup de clairon de sa renommée,' records 'L'Année Dominicaine.' And yet at the opening of the new Dominican church in Dublin, soon after, Fr. Burke was not the priest selected to preach the oration.

The success at Sandymount was followed, on November 25, 1859, by an eloquent panegyric on St. Catherine, preached in her church, Meath Street, by Fr. Burke. Another on St. Vincent was delivered at Castleknock. He was also asked to conduct a retreat at Maynooth College. In its halls, filled with the echoes of genuine sacred oratory, his voice was warmly welcomed. His discourses, unlike penitential exercises, shed such fascination that old and young thronged forward long before the hours for which they were announced, and took up their positions anxiously looking out for the rich treat coming. 'We have found a hitherto undiscovered mine,' said Canon Farrell. This was the beginning of one of the most prominent phases of his career. He was regularly employed in conducting retreats for the clergy in various dioceses, having directed so many as twelve in a single year; while from all parts of

the country innumerable demands were made on him for charity sermons.

Spiritual retreats, which Dr. Doyle revived with salutary effects, owed their birth in the first instance to St. Ignatius of Loyola, whose book on the subject exhibits a rare knowledge of the human heart. The retreat formerly lasted four weeks; but a shorter period is found to work best. Priests, laics, students, all confessed the advantages they derived from Fr. Burke when conducting those sacred exercises. Retirement, silence, self-examination with a firm resolve to make the retreat as though it were to be the last, were all mighty materials on which the preacher worked.

About this time Dr. Thomas FitzPatrick met him travelling by boat, on the beautiful river Lee, accompanied by Fr. Falvey, the eminent polemic and pastor of Glanmire. Repartees were freely interchanged. The priests, like two practised swordsmen, fenced and parried, cut and thrust, brightening the interest of that proverbially picturesque journey. Falvey, like Burke, was a mimic, and he cleverly portrayed the peculiarities of his own Bishop, Dr. Murphy.

The second occasion on which Mr. Frank Sullivan met Fr. Burke was at the station of the Ulster Railway in Dublin. The Dominican was going to preach at Dundalk, and Sullivan was deputed to report him. Anxious to enjoy the sweets of his society in undisturbed luxury, he persuaded the guard to place a private compartment at their disposal. The preacher jumped in, the pressman followed, feeling almost as grateful to the guard as if he were St. Peter, who held the key of still higher privileges. The enjoyment of that journey, Mr. Sullivan says, served his memory as an elixir for years after. While cigars were freely smoked, rich anecdotes and stories of rare comicality fell in exhaustless profusion, until at last the porters, sonorously yelling 'Dundalk,' reminded Sullivan that all terrestrial joys are doomed to end too soon.

As it is notorious that Fr. Burke was a smoker, it may be well to add that for some years before his death he added to the suffering of his life the mortification of abstaining from the use of tobacco. His Prior says that it would have proved a solace to him in pain and solitude, but his superiors felt that the practice was one not quite suited to a religious. A physician has said that 'smoking favours contemplation;' the contemplation referred to in this sense, however, is not of the kind inculcated by St. Dominic.

Father Burke's first Mass in Galway was celebrated under painful circumstances. His sister Nora had long been stricken by illness, one of the most touching features of which was an occasional gleam of hope in her own recovery, but hallowed by the most perfect resignation to God's will. Fr. Burke received from the Bishop permission to say Mass in her bed-chamber. During its celebration she was supported on a mattress by her mother; and Fr. Burke happening to raise his eyes for a moment saw that she was dead. Mrs. Burke had previously noticed the same sad fact, but, impressed by the solemnity of the holy sacrifice, never betrayed the slightest emotion of grief or surprise until it had terminated; and the celebrant felt bound to keep his feelings under similar command.[1]

He had probably this scene in his mind when preaching at Killarney on the decline and death of the girl in the Gospel. 'Gradually her strength decayed, and the light faded out of her eyes; the pulsation of her heart ceased.' Fr. Burke's appreciation of suppressed sorrow was shown in his grand description of Christ solemnly entering the house, silencing those who filled it with the noise of their vain lamentations, and saying, 'The maid is not dead, but sleepeth.'

The splendid Dominican churches of Cork and Limerick,

[1] Mrs. Burke's philosophic calmness is inherited by her daughter Bridget. At Fr. Burke's funeral, while other members of the family indulged in paroxysms of grief, Miss Burke's silence implied 'the composure of settled distress.'

contrasting so strongly in their grandeur with the modest West Chapel long familiar to him in Galway, charmed and delighted him. In his former pilgrimage to the ruined Abbey of Athenry, and in his visits at eventide to the sadly defaced sculpture which surrounds the West Chapel, close by his native spot, he had mingled his tears with the dew that stood in sparkles on the tombs. Thinking of the words of St. Augustine, 'In that He died He showed Himself man; in that He rose again He proved Himself God,' Fr. Burke said:

Has not the Irish Church risen again to more than her former glory? The land is covered once more with fair churches, convents, colleges, and monasteries, as of old; and who shall say that the religion that could thus suffer and rise again is not from God?

It was about this time that Fr. Burke's connection as confessor to and conductor of retreats in Loretto Abbey, Rathfarnham, began. Tallaght is about four miles from Loretto, and the frequent walk to his work served Burke's health, unless on one occasion when during frost he fell, and for some time after was disabled from the effects. The Superioress of Loretto observes in one of her kind communications addressed to the present writer:

For more than twenty years his wise and holy counsels were never wanting to us, and even now his voice, ever urging us on in the service of God, seems still to echo within these walls, yet our memories are of the earnest religious, who devoted his energies year after year, in spite of harassing pain, to the laborious work of training souls for God. His frequent retreats to nuns, children, and to ladies living in the world were always marked by great variety and exquisite adaptation to the needs of those to whom they were addressed. It was touching at these times to see the simple humility with which our dear Father concentrated his great powers on saying to each 'the word in season' which would sink into the heart and bear fruit.[1]

Mrs. Frances Ball, the foundress, was a person of such a

[1] Letter of the Superioress, Loretto Convent, Rathfarnham, Nov. 23, 1883.

stately and judicial bearing that her brother, Mr. Justice Ball, humorously said that '*she* should have been the judge, and *he* the reverend mother.' This great nun was so important a personage that Fr. Coleridge and the Rev. Dr. Hutch have each written her life. Fr. Burke found his first interview with Mrs. Ball a little embarrassing to a man of his humility and social shyness, and he often told friends the mode by which he made the frigid nun relax. He described himself as sitting in deep awe on the extreme edge of his chair, twirling his hat, when one of the young ladies who accompanied the Superioress glanced casually at a mirror. Mrs. Ball at once admonished her, quoting from Proverbs xxxi. 30: '"Beauty is vain; the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." Comeliness, child, is a grace from God, and we should carry it so in His honour. The Creator who gave it can remove it by sickness. It is an old remark that children who are fair to view grow up downright ugly.' 'The exception is sometimes found, reverend mother,' said Burke. '*I* was noted for being a very handsome child, and I have preserved my good looks.' Mrs. Ball smiled; the child smiled too, and, the ice thus broken, Fr. Burke at once felt himself at home. Next day one of the younger pupils, encouraged by some fantastic faces which Fr. Tom made for her amusement, asked him why his mouth was so wide. Mrs. Ball sternly reproved this levity, but he sought to put the awed children in good humour by explaining apologetically that when he was an infant his mother crammed him with solid stirabout, and, moreover, with the same big spoon which his father used.

Fr. Burke's features, it will be remembered, were not handsome, nor did his tonsure tend to improve nature's work. He often ridiculed his own face, and latterly, when mixing with boys on their playgrounds, he has amused them by subjecting his nose to funny changes. At some of the nuns' schools, when singing 'Annie Laurie' and other sentimental ballads, he has produced much comic effect by pointing—at touch-

ing moments—to the same feature. But though his face in repose was not commanding, yet, when delivering a divine message, it would light up with earnestness, and the searching eye suggest massive power and majesty. Mrs. Ball, writes the Rev. G. D. Power, 'regarded Fr. Burke with the highest and holiest esteem. He was her spiritual adviser and counsellor for years.'

Part of his generous plan was to utilise the gifts of wit and humour with which he was endowed by spreading around him some alleviation of the cares and woes of life. He sometimes followed Liston's imperturbable example, and the lady who has succeeded Mrs. Ball as Superioress assures us that she cannot recall an instance—even during his happiest sallies—that he really laughed. For a long time he regarded as the first law of gravity, 'Never to laugh at your own jokes.' Later on, when surrounded by clerical listeners, his stories gathered increased piquancy from the infectiousness of his laugh.

In conjunction with Fr. Towers, he opened in May 1861, at Navan, a week's retreat to the Young Men's Society. It was about this time that when travelling by train a tourist whom he knew fell into conversation with him. 'Yonder is one of the round towers of Ireland,' said Burke, pointing towards a well-known object of archæological interest, 'and here is another of them,' he added; thus informally presenting Fr. Towers, who was then of a much fuller habit than now.

In conducting a retreat for the clergy of Meath, his master hand swept the chords of their various emotions. Previously it had been the fashion to surround retreats with gloom. Novel expressions now roused the attention of an audience who under the former system might sometimes drift into drowsiness. It was during the Meath retreat that he took one of the Latin hymns and translated it into beautiful English words. 'I also heard him give one retreat to the clergy of

our diocese of Ferns,' writes no lenient critic—Canon Doyle, of Ramsgrange. 'His eloquence quite fascinated me. I could listen to him for hours.' The canon, in conclusion, speaks of him as 'the gifted, the beloved *soggarth*, as he was affectionately and familiarly called.'[1]

In 1862 Fr. Jandel, General of the Dominicans, made a visitation to Ireland. One of the regulations then enforced was the tonsure. Fr. Burke assured Fr. Callan, S.J., that to *him* was due the restoration of the tonsure. Thus it would appear that he urged it on Jandel; but we have heard that other Fathers were quite as anxious for it. According to Fr. Mercier, O.P., 'Fr. Burke was named by his Order member of the Committee for the Revision of the Constitutions;'[2] but this cannot have been until the grand chapter of 1871.

From the time of Tertullian, Christians were exhorted to avoid vanity in the arrangement of their hair, and the Fourth Council of Toledo in 633 ordained that all priests should shave their heads, leaving only a rim of hair behind. The Synod of Worcester in 1240 prescribed that the tonsure should increase in size with each step of the priesthood; adding a reminder that St. Paul had made a complete clearance in this respect. During earlier ages the use of the tonsure became the subject of angry controversy. Jerome took a middle course and condemned eccentricity, both as regards long hair and shaven heads.[3]

On June 30, 1862, Fr. Burke preached at the dedication of a new church at Lanesborough. A like ceremony at Clondalkin on August 10, 1862, brought out his powers to such purpose that Dr. Lynch, now Archbishop of Toronto, who officiated with Dr. Cullen at the function, was so much struck by the

[1] It is pleasant to find that, unlike some other advanced politicians who ceased to admire Fr. Burke when he failed to join their platform, Canon Doyle's appreciation of the man has continued undiminished.

[2] *L'Année Dominicaine*, No. 279, p. 409.

[3] *Vide* In Ezech. xliv.

man that the thought of getting him made a bishop in Canada seems to have had its birth during the delivery of this sermon. When we come to the year 1875 this point will be more fully noticed.

The profession of a nun, at which Fr. Burke was so often a conspicuous figure, is a very interesting spectacle. The Bishop, seated on his throne, asks the novice if she is willing to persevere in the observance of celibacy, and, on receiving her acquiescence, he places her hands between his while she solemnly pronounces her perpetual vows. The Bishop then kneels in front of the altar while the choir chants the Litany of the Saints. At a later stage the professed nun retires to a robing room, and reappears, when the prelate puts the ring on her finger and the veil on her head, together with a bridal wreath. A profession cancels a promise of marriage, and unless in the most extreme case, sanctioned by Papal dispensation, a girl once professed can never return to the world or even enter another Order governed by milder rules. In some Orders a black pall is spread over the prostrate nuns while they make their vows. The formula of reception takes place one year anterior to the profession. The postulant kneels before the Bishop in a splendid bridal dress, and then her hair is cut off. A beautiful sermon on Faith, Hope, and Charity by Fr. Burke rendered memorable the reception into the Convent of St. Clare, Harold's Cross, of Miss Whelan by Dr. Meagher, V.G. This took place on December 19, 1862, and on February 10 following he preached on a similar occasion, Dr. Meagher, as usual, officiating.

I accompanied Fr. Burke with a number of pious ladies to the profession of a nun at a country convent (observes Canon Pope). They seemed so subdued that he deemed it well to rouse them by some fantastic performance. Reducing his height, he personated to the life the tiny Vicar General, Dr. Meagher, in the act of receiving a novice, and asking the solemn question, 'My child, are you——' &c. The little falsetto voice in reply was inimitably natural, but the fictitious Dr. Meagher was so perfect that I could have sworn it

was he who spoke. On the same occasion he gave an admirable imitation of the notes of a fiddle *à la* Paganini.

The solemn ceremony of a profession always wound up with a *déjeuner*, which Fr. Burke never failed to make most enjoyable by his exhaustless fun. One moment he was making puzzles to amuse children, the next telling some of the strange stories which have been elsewhere described. Sir John Lentaigne praised his sermons as very flowery. 'No wonder I'd be *floury*,' replied Fr. Tom; 'wasn't my father a baker?'

Up to this period, but not after, Fr. Burke prepared his sermons. Dr. MacNally, Bishop of Clogher, a prelate who earned increased prestige from brilliant antecedents as head of 'the Dunboyne' at Maynooth, paid Fr. Burke the compliment of asking him to preach on the occasion of blessing a bell in his diocese. Fr. Burke, to make his sermons as perfect as possible, pressed into the service every point that could enhance their effect; and on receipt of Dr. MacNally's letter he procured from Mr. O'Byrne the 'German Anthology of Mangan,' merely to see Schiller's lines on the founding of a bell. Dr. MacNally had long been famed as a rigid observer of minute detail in all church ceremonials; but in this instance he innocently travestied a rite which under circumstances of less difficulty could not have failed to prove imposing. From the following statement of the bare facts furnished in writing by the highest ecclesiastical authority in the diocese it will be guessed how much Fr. Burke made of the materials when at Maynooth College, on a social occasion, he described the scene:

In the summer of 1861 (records the document before us) the blessing of the bell of St. Mary's Church, Clontibret, took place, the officiating prelate being the late Most Rev. Dr. MacNally, who is well remembered as a great stickler for the observance of the liturgical rubrics. When the Bishop was equipped for the ceremony he insisted on going aloft to the tower, where the bell had been previously hoisted. Clad in cope and mitre, with pastoral staff in hand, he proceeded to squeeze himself up a very narrow staircase and afterwards to make the ascent of a high ladder, preceded and followed

by a posse of priests and acolytes, including Fr. Tom Burke, who was to preach the sermon of the day. The small chamber, already half filled by the bell, was so crowded that one of the clergymen unfortunately trod on the Bishop's toes, on one of which there was a troublesome corn. The Bishop could not repress an audible expression of pain, adding that there was no rubric for such acts.

Here the chanters intoned the proper Antiphon, but were summarily pulled up by Dr. MacNally complaining that the note was incorrect, and calling on Fr. Burke to set them right. Fr. Tom then attempted the intonation, but he too was incontinently silenced, the Bishop declaring that they were 'all wrong! all wrong!' With admirable simplicity Fr. Burke requested his Lordship to give them the proper note, whereupon the prelate made some audible effort, and the whole affair proceeded as well as could be under trying circumstances.

There was one part of the performance which Dr. MacNally did not silence—Fr. Burke's sermon. This mentioned how God had commanded Moses to make trumpets of beaten silver to announce the passing of the ark. Having eloquently dwelt upon the second great purpose of the church bell, the daily commemoration of the mystery of the Incarnation by the sound of the Angelus, he said that in its familiar chimes various emotions would be expressed. It would be busy ringing on festivals. In the crisp air of Christmas it would gladden their hearts. Easter would be ushered in by its joyous notes; not only the feasts of the Church, but their own joys and sorrows would find their voice in this tongue of the Church. The glad young bride coming to put her virgin hand in that of her husband, would rejoice to hear the bell telling of two hearts made happy in God. When the aged lay on the bed of sickness, feeling that the soul was ebbing into eternity, while the terrors of judgment made the agony of death well-nigh insupportable, the bell would toll its sad, deep note, calling upon all who heard its voice to put up a prayer to assist their dying brother; and when they and their children would be laid at the foot of the altar, while the Church intoned over them the words, 'I am the Resurrection

and the Life,' the sad note of the bell tolling in its tower would sound like a prayer that He might raise them up again. He concluded by telling them to remember that the bell would be consecrated by chrism and holy oil, that its voice might go forth with the potency of God's blessing upon it to dispel the evil phantoms of the air, to scatter the spirits of the storm, to shield them from 'the business'[1] that walketh about in the dark,' and to save their crops, flocks, and families from any devastating angel that might spread its wings above them.

The MS. before us concludes with a scene hardly of sufficient importance to print, but which perhaps ought not to be excluded, coming from such a source. The Bishop and Fr. Tom left the church together, and as they were taking their seats in a carriage observed a cripple seated in a box on four wheels drawn by a dog, and appealing loudly for alms. 'Where are you from?' asked Dr. MacNally. 'Galway, my Lord,' he replied, while Fr. Burke's eyes sparkled to hear it. 'You should stay at home,' said the prelate. 'Your Holiness, that wasn't the way the Apostles treated the poor cripple at the door of the temple.' 'What did they do for him?' The cripple said, after some hesitation, 'Well, your honour, if they gave him nothing, I'm sure they did not take the nose off him.' 'Good, my Lord,' whispers Fr. Tom; 'that deserves half-a-crown.' The Bishop took the hint, enjoining the man to return to Galway as fast as he could.

'His favourite helps in the preparation of his sermons,' writes his former novice, Fr. Power, 'were the works of St. Thomas, Paolo Segneri, and John Henry Newman.' But indeed there never was a man who had less need to prepare. The digestive faculty of his mind was most remarkable. He had but to skim hurriedly a chapter of the 'Summa,' and its cream remained ready for immediate use. Proofs of his marvellously retentive memory will be found in facts mentioned later on by Fr. Power.

[1] *Vide* Douay Bible (Psalm xc. 6). In the Anglican version 'pestilence' is given instead of 'business,' and the Psalm is the 91st.

Missionary work, on which Fr. Burke now more fully entered, is an authorised crusade to some remote parish with the object of arousing the tepid to ardour, and by a succession of strong blows putting error to flight. He found that sermons often left some snug corner of the conscience unreached, and hence the need of a series of appeals, prayers, and meditations searchingly stimulative of penitential feelings. Among the fruits of a popular mission are the rekindling of faith, the relinquishment of old feuds, the repudiation of criminal connections, the re-cementing of separated couples, and the restitution of dishonest gains. It cannot be denied that some persons confess to the missioner who might hesitate to divulge to the resident pastor; and, moreover, missioners are armed with powers to deal with cases ordinarily reserved for episcopal absolution. If Fr. Burke found it necessary, like St. Vincent Ferrar, to rouse by terrifying themes, he never failed to reassure in the end with beautiful exordiums on the mercy and love of God. These often brought forth floods of tears. From the pulpit he would proceed to the confessional, and there reap the rich harvest sown by his eloquence. The mission generally ended with a renewal of baptismal vows, and the dedication of the parish to his early patron, the blessed Virgin Mary. All persons well acquainted with the scenes of these missions cannot fail to have been struck with the changed face of family and parochial life by which they are invariably succeeded.

On the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, Frs. Burke and Prendergast, O.P., commenced a good work at Sheffield.

> For the opening of our new mission (writes Fr. Prendergast) a Protestant church of some kind had been obtained at White Cross, Sheffield. Fr. Burke and I went there for three weeks; we had Mass at five o'clock A.M. at the new place, and had evening service both there and at the parish church daily. Immense crowds attended.

The mission began with a sermon from Fr. Burke, explaining its objects and the means to reach them. There

were three discourses each day. Fr. Burke preached on death, judgment, hell, intemperance, cursing and blaspheming, scandal, &c. The ninth sermon was one of crowning grandeur —on Heaven—the last on Perseverance and the observance of the Ten Commandments. Fr. Burke's first sermons at Sheffield during the retreat were at a quarter before five A.M., and

even then (observes Brother Joseph) a large audience had assembled. On the last night of the mission one discourse on the Apostles' Creed lasted from seven to a quarter past ten. This was followed by some splendid psalmody, in which all the congregation joined. Among several remarkable conversions made was that of an infidel with a wife and seven children. Previous to this change Burke told the clerk that the chief difficulty he found was in providing godfathers and godmothers for so large a party. 'I'll supply all that,' said the clerk, and of course he did so. A tall black man was one of the most punctual and exemplary attendants. During the mission Fr. Burke, in one of the more sensational sermons which missioners are sometimes obliged to introduce, bemoaned that the devil had entered into their midst. All eyes were immediately turned to the spot where the sable stranger stood, much to his own and the preacher's discomfiture.

Fr. Burke was greatly pleased to see the fruit of his labours, especially the number of converts made. Yet God did not permit his joy to be full. Years after, when preaching in America on the vice of intemperance, he told the following painful incident:

I was on a mission, some years ago, in a manufacturing town in England. I was preaching there every evening; and a man came to me one night, after a sermon on drunkenness. He came in—a fine man; a strapping intellectual-looking man. But the eye was almost sunk in his head; the forehead was furrowed with premature wrinkles; the hair was white, though the man was comparatively young. He was dressed shabbily, scarce a shoe to his feet, though it was a night of drenching rain. He came in to me excitedly, after the sermon. He told me his history. 'I don't know,' he said, 'that there is any hope for me; but still, as I was listening to the sermon, I must speak to you. If I don't speak to some one my heart will break to-night.' What was his story? A few years before he had amassed in trade

twenty thousand pounds. He had married an Irish girl—one of his own race and creed—young, beautiful, and accomplished. He had two sons and a daughter. For a certain time everything went on well. 'At last,' he said, 'I had the misfortune to begin to drink: neglected my business, and then my business began to neglect me. The woman saw poverty coming, and began to fret, and lost her health. At last, when we were paupers, she sickened and died. I was drunk,' he said, 'the day that she died. I sat by her bedside. I was drunk when she was dying.' 'The sons—what became of them?' 'Well,' he said, 'they were mere children. The eldest of them is no more than eighteen; and both are now suffering penal servitude.' 'The girl?' 'Well,' he said, 'I sent the girl to a school where she was well educated. She came home to me at the age of sixteen—a beautiful young woman. She was the one consolation I had; but I was drunk all the time.' 'Well, what became of her?' He looked at me. 'Do you ask me about that girl?' he said; 'what became of her?' And the man sank at my feet. 'God of heaven! She is on the streets to-night!' The moment he said those words he ran out. I went after him. 'Oh, no, no!' he said; 'there is no mercy in heaven for me.' He went away, cursing God, to meet a drunkard's death. He had sent a broken-hearted mother to the grave; he sent his two sons to perdition; he sent his only daughter to be a living hell; and then he died blaspheming God!

The Rev. J. P. Prendergast, who was his colleague in this memorable mission, is now priest of St. Pancras, Lewes, and has been kind enough to write down some details of small incidents which grew out of it.

After the mission Fr. Burke and I went to see the cathedral at York. When we had gratified our curiosity and had returned to the railway station, and had taken our tickets for Dublin, we met one of the English Dominican Fathers on his way from Newcastle to Stone to assist next day at the consecration of Mother Margaret's new church. He induced us to alter our intentions, and we went on with him that night as far as Derby. We put up at an old English inn near the Catholic church. We could get but one room in which there were only two beds, and, as we were three, it was clear that one only could have a bed for himself. It was my fortune to have the bed, and Fr. Burke and the other arranged as best they could. However, there was very little time for sleep, owing to inexhaustible gossip on old times with the Father from Newcastle, who was an old

friend. I should have mentioned that soon after our arrival at the inn we learned from the crowd and from the light in the windows that there was something going on at the church. So we went over and found that one of the Fathers from Haverstock Hill was conducting a short mission, and doing it all himself. We called on the parish priest. The Dominican Father had begun the evening service, and was giving his instructions, after which he would preach, and then give Benediction. Father Burke's arrival was most opportune to supply a sermon. The parish priest and the Father from Newcastle attacked him on the subject, and although I never saw him so unwilling to preach, yet he gave way, and the parish priest expressed delight that there was such a treat in store for his people. Fr. Burke robed himself and retired to a private room to put a few thoughts together for the occasion, and we were saying what an agreeable surprise it would give the congregation. Meantime the parish priest wrote on a slip of paper and sent it out to the Father who was giving the retreat: 'Fr. Burke is here and will preach the sermon for you.' After a few minutes the boy returned with the same slip, on the back of which was written, 'Thanks; I will preach myself.' I need not say what confusion there was in the camp, and Father Burke was not well pleased in being asked to make a fool of himself. But he spoke pleasantly of the incident after, and with the Pastor of Arles, said, 'He who preached himself did more than St. Paul did, who preached Christ crucified.' Next day we went on to Stone, assisted at the consecration of the church of the Bishop of Birmingham, heard the Bishop of Northampton preach, was present at a grand entertainment in the Town Hall, and then returned to Ireland.

During the progress of the Sheffield mission, Fr. Burke had recruited his energies at intervals by the strange expedient of making a puppet sailor dance for the housekeeper, Mrs. Uttley, and Mr. Stephens, clerk of the church. This performance was given on the kitchen flags, when by some invisible thread he caused the automaton to dance every form of jig and reel to the music of his own oral whistle. Mr. Stephens became so much charmed by Fr. Burke that he followed him to Ireland and entered under him as a lay novice at Tallaght. He is now well known as Brother Joseph, attached to the Dominican house in Dublin. It may be explained that, as female servants are ex-

cluded from monasteries, all domestic services are discharged by lay brothers. The success of the rehearsals just referred to led Fr. Burke to give on his return to Ireland several performances of the dancing man. He originally got it from a friend whom Fr. Burke always called 'Puss White,' and who lived under the 'Hell Fire Club,' near Tallaght. Between this wonderful story-teller and Burke the closest intimacy subsisted. He had largely derived the tales from his grandfather, Bumbo White, and T. O'Mara. Mr. White tells us that the first time he introduced the dancing man at a clerical gathering, a priest, utterly confounded by the trick, and failing to make the automaton move on being challenged, traced with his thumb a cross over the mysterious thing—possibly not uninfluenced in his suspicion by the *locale* from whence it hailed. The rapidity with which 'Puss White' could change his dress and assume strange characters charmed the kindred spirit of our genial friar. White had been at school with Gustavus V. Brooke, when he probably first acquired his Thespian taste.

On Montpelier Hill, near Tallaght, stands the old structure wherein the meetings of the 'Hell Fire Club' once held sway. Fr. Burke when one day taking his novices for a walk over the hill showed them the house to which on a tempestuous night he had been summoned to the bedside of a dying Christian. Their ramble becoming interrupted by a shower, all entered this house for shelter, and Fr. Burke was soon recognised with passionate exclamations of gratitude and delight by the mother of his former penitent.

In May 1863, Fr. Burke entered on a mission at St. Wilfrid's, Hulme, Manchester, in which he received most valuable assistance from the Very Rev. J. T. Towers, now Provincial O.P., and Fr. Albert Buckler, an eminent English Dominican at Haverstock Hill. 'After this date,' writes Fr. Towers, 'he gradually fell off from mission work, the calls upon him for charity sermons becoming so incessant.'

When engaged in conducting those missions the voice of the friar preacher reached many a seared conscience. Men might be there who had committed sins worse than those that brought the deluge of fire upon the cities of Pentapolis. Such men were reminded that if they had violated the laws of this world as they had outraged the laws of God—if they had insulted human society as they had insulted the Lord Jesus—if their iniquities were only taken cognisance of by an earthly tribunal—how heavily they would be dealt with. They would perhaps be dragged from their firesides by the arm of justice and taken publicly through the streets, every eye peering curiously, every hand upraised. Possibly the criminal might be flung into a prison, and, after days and days of waiting and anxiety, again find himself in the open court. The world would be called on to bear testimony of his crime. No feeling of his would be spared, nor durst he shrink into a corner to hide his guilty head. In his transit to the prison he might be exposed to the groans of the multitude previous to being disposed of as the world deals with its criminals.

But (he would sometimes add—substituting the lamb for the lion) if this sinner appear before the Son of God and say, 'Saviour Judge, let us enter into judgment,' Christ takes him by the hand, wards off the crowd, brings him into a secret tribunal, calls no witnesses against him, allows no finger of shame to be pointed, listens to what he has to say against himself. He says, 'Speak, my son, and speak freely.' He speaks his deeds of shame, it is true, in the ears of man. That man is there as the representative of the Lord Jesus, Whose mercy he is about to minister. He hears the whispered word. It must not be heard by the Angel of Mercy who is there, but only by the sinner and the priest of Christ. That word falls upon the priest's ear; for a moment it enters into his mind, and in a moment it passes away—just as on a calm summer evening some person takes a pebble and flings it into the bosom of a deep, placid lake; for an instant there is a ripple, the waters close, and no human eye shall ever see it again. So, for an instant, the sound of the sin makes but a ripple upon the mind of the priest, thrills for an instant, and passes into the unfathomable ocean of the merciful heart of Christ. The

waters of His mercy close over it, and that sin is gone—gone for ever! Not eye of angel, not eye of man, nor eye of God at the hour of judgment shall ever look upon it again; for the blood of Jesus Christ has fallen upon it and washed it away. How little it costs the priest to say, 'I absolve thee in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.' How little it costs the sinner! Scarcely a humiliation. If, indeed, a man had to proclaim his confession, and make it publicly; if a man had to make it before the faithful, on a Sunday, as all the people come crowding in to Mass; even then, if such a confession would obtain pardon for me, great God, would it not be a great boon to be able to purchase such a grace even at such a cost—nay, even at the ruin of my character? It would be cheap, considering what I got in return. If the law of Almighty God said to the sinner, 'I will bring thee to the stake—and only at the last moment, when the last drop of life's blood is coming from that broken heart—then, and only then, will I absolve thee.' Would it not be cheaply purchased—this pardon of God, this grace of God, this eternity of God's joy in heaven—even by the rendering of the last drop of our blood? But no! Full of love, full of commiseration, Christ comes to us with mercy, sparing every feeling of the sinner, making every difficult thing smooth, trying to anticipate, by His sweetness, all the humiliation and all the pain, shrouding all under that wonderful veil of secrecy which has never for an instant been rent since the Church was founded; and in the end it is the only tribunal where, when a man is found guilty, the sole sentence pronounced is one of acquittal. In other tribunals he receives his punishment. In that of penitence, all a man has to say is, 'Of these am I guilty before my God, with sorrow I confess them!' The only sentence is, 'You are acquitted; go in peace.'

It was about this time that the Rev. J. P. Prendergast and Fr. Burke conducted a mission for a fortnight at the parish church, Navan.

But still more important work (writes Fr. Prendergast) was the mission at Crosskeys, Co. Cavan, where with four other Fathers we laboured for four weeks. We lodged at the house of a very good old gentleman who was the cause of much amusement during the mission, and who was a great admirer of the Sovereign Pontiff, and particularly of Fr. Burke, but who very often failed to carry his admiration so far as to go through snow and frost about a mile to hear him. On these occasions he was always most anxious

to cover his absence by marked praise of the sermon. When we would be coming to his house from the church, no matter what the time, he would meet us with a glass and the brandy bottle, and say, 'Well, now, Fr. Burke, you're lost; a little of this will do you good.' Then, when each in turn declined the attention, he would say, 'Ah, you are not wise;' and, taking it himself, exclaim, 'Here's to the health of the good holy Father!' Particularly on the occasions when he remained at home he would say on our return, 'By the virtue of my solemn oath (this was a favourite expression), Fr. Burke, you are the greatest preacher in Ireland.' When asked how he liked the sermon, he said, 'You surpassed yourself to-day; the devil such a sermon was ever preached before in Ireland.' I need not tell you how Fr. Burke would adroitly draw out the old gentleman, and what a constant source of amusement all this was during our recreation and rest from our hard work.[1]

Fr. Prendergast adds that he has not an idea as to the date of the mission at Crosskeys; this will be found supplied in the following portion of the 'Recollections' which the Bishop of Kilmore has kindly placed at our disposal:

The Crosskeys mission, parish of Denn, diocese of Kilmore (writes his Lordship), took place in October 1862. It may well be said, without any reflection on the good zealous Fathers who were with him, that Burke was indeed the very soul of it. The late Rev. Patrick Gilroy was parish priest then of Denn, and lived in the remote hamlet of Crosskeys. Gilroy was a low-sized, guileless man, who had a very high idea of himself and his people, and who said a thousand good things without being conscious of it. It is quite a common thing in Kilmore yet to say, 'As Fr. Gilroy would put it.' Burke enjoyed Gilroy very much, and drew him out wonderfully. 'I tell you, Fr. Burke,' said Gilroy, after the mission, 'it was the Denn mission that made a man of you;' intimating that Burke had been quite an obscure monk till he had the good fortune to be sent to the Crosskeys mission. Gilroy ever after remained a 'character' in Fr. Tom's eyes. Whenever he visited Kilmore afterwards he would not be happy without Gilroy, and to see Gilroy was enough to set him off in a kink of laughter. In October 1868, Fr. Burke preached in our Cathedral, in aid of the orphanage attached to Poor Clare Convent, Cavan. Of course the sermon was a great success in every sense,

[1] Letter of the Rev. J. P. Prendergast, St. Pancras, Lewes, March 4, 1884.

and a large party—lay and cleric—was invited to dinner, which came off in the refectory of the school. As in duty bound, according to the good old custom, I gave the health of the distinguished preacher when the cloth was removed. Burke responded in his own felicitous way, beginning in a low tone, and looking very serious all the while. As he got on with his speech, glancing down to where Father Gilroy was sitting, he said that his sermon would not have been half such a success were it not for the presence of the good parish priest of Denn, whom he happened to see in the church. The very sight of him had actually inspired him. Gilroy's name was almost as well known in Rome as in Cavan; for everywhere Burke went he hung some racy anecdote on his name.[1]

'Denn's Theology' was of course among the chaff with which Burke plied poor Gilroy.

Fr. Burke took a special interest in the diocese of Kilmore. At one time the Bishop of Kilmore was the only Catholic prelate in all Ireland.

The infirmities of Dr. Browne, the venerable occupant of this see, led him in 1863 to call for the help of a coadjutor. A feeling prevailed that his choice ought to fall on the great preacher who had just won golden opinions in Cavan, and we learn from the Galway priests that they were anxious to see Burke wear its mitre. But Burke himself was more desirous to wear the cap and bells for the amusement of his novices in hours of play, and was sincerely happy when, on May 24, 1863, Dr. Conaty accepted the burden.

Canon Burke, the late Pastor of Saggard, was a man of formal manners and aspiring social tendencies. He was almost the only priest who attended the Viceregal *levées*, and had the honour of receiving at his table the Commander of the Forces, Lord Strathnairn, and the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He liked ceremony, and expected, if he did not openly require, its observance. Part of Tallaght was under his jurisdiction. Canon Burke announced a visit to

[1] Letter of the Lord Bishop of Kilmore, Cullies House, Cavan, to the Author, May 6, 1884.

the convent by command. Father Tom, with his usual love of fun, organised a band of boys, who, as the parochus advanced, struck up 'See, the conquering hero comes!' They were not very conspicuously posted, and their instruments seemed to consist of every imaginable sort, from the sack-but to a jews-harp. A rather effective noise was produced and favourably impressed the visitor, who, innocent of the science of music himself, was easily played upon by others. What seemed a fiddle, bagpipes, &c., were doubtless vocal sounds produced by Fr. Tom himself. The delicacy and danger of the experiment gave additional zest to the performance of it. This canon, irreproachable in the discharge of his priestly functions, was even stern and sometimes querulous. Curates regarded Saggard as Purgatory, and would have preferred to receive an appointment to Siberia. One false note might have betrayed the trick and led to irksome consequences.

The Rev. W. H. Anderdon, whose face was quite a sermon in itself, had been for some years a very popular preacher in the church of the Catholic University, Dublin, Dr. Newman being its rector. On the retirement of Fr. Anderdon to England, to which he was naturally attached by birth and belongings, for Dr. Manning was his uncle, Fr. Burke took his place in the pulpit. Here he introduced that class of discourse known as Conferences, whereby Lacordaire and Monsabré had enchained audiences in Notre Dame. Fr. Burke never saw Lacordaire; but the Dean of the Catholic University, who had been listening to Lacordaire for years in Paris, was greatly struck by Burke's resemblance to him as a preacher. Lacordaire, he says, used such graceful action that when his exquisitely fashioned hands would emerge from beneath his habit all regarded it with pleasure; and the same remark applies to Fr. Burke. Our Dominican's Advent Conferences at this time, mainly on the Eight Beatitudes, have been published in America. Of the second—one peculiarly his own—he said:

The Christian must be not only a man of faith, living for Divine purposes, influenced by supernatural motives, grasping at the invisible beneath the forms of things that appear; but he must also be imbued with the virtue of meekness.

It is the opinion of a sound critic, Mr. W. K. Sullivan, then Professor in the Catholic University, and afterwards President of the Queen's College, Cork, that Fr. Burke's sermons at this time greatly surpassed the orations which, when he became more famous, he delivered in Cork.

He was now Prior of Tallaght, but his activity outside was not hampered by the cares of government. From March 2 to 30, 1863, we find him daily preaching in the church of the Catholic University; at other times attracting large audiences in the old Dominican Chapel, Denmark Street.

Time was when from timidity or other causes he preached with eyes shut. The face of each edified listener now became familiar to him.

There is a third motive for our joy this morning. May I, dearly beloved, in this, which I may call the closing day of our Lent, congratulate those whom I see before me! The constant attendance of many amongst you during the last forty evenings has made your faces familiar to me. Over these countenances have I seen from time to time the expression, now of sorrow, now of joy, but always one of sympathy with Jesus Christ. Of this am I a witness, and on this do I congratulate you. If it be true that the Christian man is, indeed, a man in whom Christ lives, according to the words of the Apostle, 'I live no longer, I, but Christ lives within me;' then, according to His words, you are lost to yourselves, you are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. If, then, the Christian man be the man in whom Christ lives, well may I felicitate you upon every emotion of joy and of sorrow that has passed through your hearts and over your faces during these forty blessed days; because these emotions were the gift of Christ, and the evidence of the life of Christ in you, and of your familiarity with Christ's image. May I congratulate you on a good confession and a fervent communion? May I, in heart and spirit, bow down before every man amongst you to-day, as a man who holds in his bosom Jesus Christ; as a man whose heart is not an empty tomb, like that in the garden

outside Jerusalem ; not occupied merely by an angel, but whose heart is the sanctuary wherein the glorified Saviour dwells this day?

The Dominicans at Tallaght, unlike secular priests, recite the Divine Office together in choir every morning ; but it occasionally happened that Fr. Burke, owing to special engagements, failed to join his brethren, and therefore was obliged to read it alone. All priests are bound to repeat the Office daily, under pain of mortal sin ; but among their various duties it is not easy to grasp this observance at hours perhaps best suited for its study. Hence it is that a priest engaged in reading his Office in a train or along some rural road, as he walks, is an object familiar among us.

Any one single passage of the Scriptures (observes Fr. Burke) represents, in a few words, a portion of the infinite wisdom of God. Consequently, any one sentence of those inspired writings should furnish the Christian mind with sufficient matter for thought for many a long day. Now we priests are obliged, every day of our lives, to recite a large portion of the inspired Word of God in the form of prayer. Never was there a greater mistake than to suppose that Catholics do not read the Scriptures. All the prayers that we priests have to say—seven times a day approaching the Almighty—are all embodied in the words of Holy Writ ; and not only are we obliged to recite them as prayers, but we are also obliged to make them the subject of our daily and our constant thought.

Fr. Burke having been detained at a long church service in Dublin, sought fresh air on the outside of the omnibus which ran part of the way to Tallaght. His Breviary was soon produced, and he was deep in its contents when an eminent manufacturer of aërated waters—an Evangelical—having joined the other passengers on the top, felt privileged to read him a lecture. 'The Lord tells us, sir,' he said, 'that when you pray you should not be as the hypocrites who love to pray in public, and at the corners of streets, that they may be seen by men. Now,' he added, 'when *I* pray, I enter into my closet, and when I have shut the door,

I pray in secret,' alluding of course to our Lord's words (St. Matthew vi. 6). Without looking up, Fr. Burke replied aloud, 'Yes, and then you come on the top of an omnibus and tell everyone all about it!'

When they again met it was inside. Mr. ——, on entering, said, 'It's as hot as Purgatory.' A general titter followed. 'So you believe in Purgatory?' said Fr. Burke. 'Not I, indeed,' responded the polemic disdainfully. Fr. Tom, with a solemn face but a twinkling eye, retorted, 'Well, if you won't believe in Purgatory you may go to hell.' For an instant the other waxed indignant, but, catching the real meaning of his reprover, laughed heartily. A new Prior, however, who had succeeded Fr. Tom, and happened to be also in the car, failed to see the wit of the alternative offered, and enjoined him by his vow of holy obedience to be silent.

Fr. Burke's final interview with his tormentor belongs to a more advanced period, but is inserted the more readily because it furnishes an amicable sequel.

There was a novice who began his course with Fr. Burke in 1857, but whose theological progress, owing to sickness and other causes, was so much retarded that, when Fr. Burke returned Prior to Tallaght, he found the same man still a novice under him. Burke, chagrined by this and other worries, one day sought the calming influence of the open air by travelling on the omnibus. He again took out his book, feeling that he was as much entitled to read travelling as the man mentioned in the Acts who, 'sitting in his chariot, read Esaias the prophet.' He was again twitted by Mr. ——, who, full of religious zeal, seemed constantly on the watch for him. The friar paid no heed. At last, one remark more pointed than the rest was followed by another to the effect that Fr. Burke evidently did not know him. 'I know you too well,' he replied. 'You are the windy water-maker.' Mr. —— replied, 'You are in anger with me, and if this heavily laden 'bus were now to capsize, it would not be well

for you.' Fr. Burke gave him his hand, and we believe that they never met again.

To the last he was fond of the top of a tram bound for some rural or marine suburb, and of returning by the same conveyance. It required courage on his part to do this, for some ascetics think that a position of such prominence is ill-chosen by a priest. Fr. Burke was amused by an incident which occurred at this time. The Vicar-General, afterwards Cardinal MacCabe, observing Fr. Dan O'Keefe, of St. Paul's, perched in the situation described, wrote to 'Dear Keefe' suggesting that in future he should travel inside the vehicle. O'Keefe, who was a rough diamond, replied, 'Dear Cabe, I have often seen you on the top of a horse. Get thee henceforth inside the animal.'

Within the Order or outside it Fr. Burke's sense of the ludicrous was ever sensitively ready to be tickled.

A big strapping fellow from Waterford (writes Fr. Power, one of the novices) was presented for the reception of the habit. When led to the altar steps by Fr. Burke (then Master of Novices), the postulant was asked by the Provincial what religious name he desired to assume. In a strong thick brogue the good young fellow answered, 'Joachim, Father,' which he pronounced very emphatically, '*Choke him, Father.*' It went very hard on Father Tom to repress a broad smile at the idea suggested by the big lay brother.[1]

[1] The district round Tallaght was his world. Its pastor, who had done good work in his day, had now become effete; and this inertia greatly struck our preaching Friar, so full of life and energy. This priest was informed by his Bishop that really he must preach. Novices and others were amused by Fr. Burke's portrayal of the old man trying to do so, but coughs and expectoration were the result of the effort. The Archbishop told him to get a book and read an Instruction to the People. Fr. Burke said that thereupon he bought an old book called the 'Mirror of the True Religious; or, the Glories of the Mission.' Our Friar created much amusement by personating the old pastor, doubled up with lumbago, and reading aloud the 'Mirror,' whilst an acolyte held a candle to assist him. 'St. Francis lived on bread and water'—(groan)—'and slept on the floor'—(groan)—'and when the saints had to do so much to save their souls, how much more ought ye to do?'

The reflections of the 'Mirror' were marked by rigorism, and it was mentioned that for a priest to break silence before Mass was a mortal sin. 'He did

Tallaght in the month of May appears at its best. Not a day now passed that he did not preach among the green trees to the people, or address 'Ferverinos' to his novices. One of his sermons on Mary, delivered in America, glances through a vista of the past:

Oh, when I think of the women that I have met in the dear old land of faith! the women oppressed from one cause or from another! —some with sickness in the house; some with, perhaps, a dissolute son; some with a drunken husband; or the fear of impending calamity —how often have I seen them coming to me in the month of May, and, brightening up, say, 'Thank God, the month is come! I know she in heaven will pray for me, and that my prayers shall be heard!' And I have seen them so often come before the end of the month, to tell me with joy in their eyes that the Mother heard their prayer; then was I reminded of the mysterious cloud that broke out in the heavens and rained down the saving rain. One have I before me, whom I knew and loved, a holy nun who for more than fifty years had served God in angelic purity and heroic sacrifice. For seven months she was confined to a bed of suffering that deepened into agony. And during those months her prayer to God was to increase her pain; not to let her leave the world until one whom she loved dearly, and who was leading a reckless life, should be converted unto God. Weeks passed, and month followed month, and frequently did I sit at the bedside of my holy friend. That time she spent upon the cross, truly, with Christ. But when the first day of May came I knelt down by her bedside, to cheer her with prayer and sympathy. She said, 'I feel that the month is come that will bring me joy. It is Mary's month, the month when prayer grows most powerful in heaven.' Before it was over he for whom she prayed was converted to God. The sacrifice of suffering was accepted, and she who began the month in sorrow ended it with joy. His sacred graces are poured out at the instance of Mary's prayer. They will produce to-day the flower and leaf of promise.[1]

As Fr. Burke's undying devotion to Mary is constantly found asserting itself in his life, it may be well to inform some

not know till long after,' said Fr. Burke, 'that the book had been condemned by the Council of Trent.'

But there can be little doubt that in all this he was amusing his novices with a scene more likely to take place than one which had actually occurred.

[1] 'Divine Faith the Principle of Christian Life,' Brooklyn, Oct. 29, 1872.

readers who do not belong to his Church that it never approached 'Latria,' or divine honour. Preaching at St. Vincent Ferrer's, New York, on May 1, 1872, he asked, 'Is it lawful for you or me to kneel down and adore the Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of God? No. Adoration belongs to God alone.'

He was never happier than when joining on Corpus Christi in the splendid Office of the Blessed Sacrament—almost the last work of Thomas Aquinas.

Not only must the grandeur and truth of their religion be ever brought home to Catholics (says Fr. Burke), but their duties must be constantly put before them, the laws of God and of the Church explained to them in practical detail and homely example; the various emotions of joy and sorrow frequently aroused, conscience kept alive by remonstrance and reproof, and appealed to by the arguments of their faith; error, danger, and sin detected and denounced; access to the Sacraments rendered easy; the services of the Church made attractive; and interest in the things of God excited in the hearts of all.[1]

The lay correspondent who has already given us a glimpse of Fr. Burke at Tallaght writes that—

He was seen to even more advantage at what he called 'functions' than in the pulpit—such as the blessing of the great bell at Tallaght; processions in the 'Friars' Walk,' where still stands the granite socket of an ancient cross. At the May processions an altar was erected beneath a canopy of trees on a natural eminence, to which the Blessed Sacrament was carried and benediction given, the priests and novices chanting litanies and little girls in white scattering rose leaves. The people knelt on both sides of the 'Friars' Walk.' I remember once a poetical friend whispering to me, 'See, the daisies bend their heads as the procession passes, and now see, they bend their heads the other way as it returns.' Fr. Thomas was a great stickler for the minutiæ of the 'functions,' and if he could not have them with all the pomp and observances of San Clemente or the Minerva, he exerted himself unsparingly in trying to carry them out even to the smallest detail (which he loved to tell had a deep mystic meaning) with the means at his disposal. He playfully told me that he hoped he'd go to heaven some time, and that functions would be continually going on there. Many a time in his poor little chapel at

[1] Sermon at Pro-Cathedral, Dublin, Nov. 27, 1878.

Tallaght he'd preach to his confraternities and small audience as carefully, as fervently, and as earnestly as if his congregation were vast, mixed, and critical. Unspoiled by fame, there was as little 'self,' beyond his actual personality, in the last sermon he preached at Tallaght in 1883 as in the first in 1855. I would sometimes say a flattering word to him after hearing one of these grand discourses, and he'd reply, 'I suppose I am becoming a talking machine,' and then very quickly change the subject to something pleasant and not over-profound; then there would be the merry laugh and passing jest, bright as the flash of the firefly.

This, however, anticipates. Tallaght is a secluded spot, and somewhat inaccessible to visitors. Our correspondent's details, though trivial, may be given, because the outer world knew nothing of the scenes he described. During the delivery of the discourses to which he above refers, Fr. Burke noted every face to such purpose that when he next saw some cloistered sisters whom he highly esteemed he would amuse them by mimicking every yawn, every squint, every wheezy cough that marked his lowly audience. To another favoured few he depicted one ragged old crone in the body of the chapel, who never ceased scratching her chest and diving her hand into the same region to bring forth a lozenge which she placed in her mouth. The same crone one day, in her admiration of the preacher, offered him, as he left the chapel, some of these sweetmeats.

At St. Mary's, Tallaght, a pyramid formed from the vertebræ of a whale adorned one of the wide walks. It was a legacy from the Protestant archbishops who had lived there. Towards the close of one Lent, when people were beginning to tire of fish diet, a party of visitors turned in to inspect the fine grounds attached to the convent.

They came upon Fr. Burke, who was strolling along in a meditative mood (writes the Rev. G. D. Power). 'Father,' asked one, 'would you be so kind as to tell us what those huge bones represent?' 'Certainly, ma'am. Those are the remains of the Wonderful Whale which Jonas swallowed—a terrible fellow for fish.' Not one of the party noticed the inversion of the Bible story.

The following, given on the authority of a priest who witnessed the incident, reminds one of the acts recorded of Lacordaire. We tell it with hesitation; but we feel fortified by the words of the Père Chocarne, O.P., the biographer of Lacordaire:

> Ought we not simply and frankly to tell the truth at all risks? . . . It seems worthier of the man whose victories we are relating. Why should we not now have the courage to tell and the public to hear of those things which he had the courage to do?

At a raffle held for a charitable purpose the prize offered was a silver teapot. During the drawing the name of a rich priest peeped forth as the winner, and Fr. Burke, on the spur of the moment, said, 'Oh, what does *he* want with it?—draw again.' Late that night the novices heard loud knocks, and these were to summon them to an adjoining room, in order to hear an avowal which their master wished to make. He then publicly reproached himself with what he had done, and, kneeling down, required the novices to approach him in succession, and for his penance and humiliation to place their right foot upon his neck.

From 'grave to gay,' was his daily programme.

From every class may be gathered traits of the man. A gardener at Tallaght tells that on one occasion after Father Tom had got his tonsure shaved, and was leaving the barber's house, he met at the door a swain who wanted to get his hair dressed for a walk with his sweetheart. 'Take care how you go in there, or you may be treated barbarously,' Fr. Burke said. 'See what he has just done to me.' The youth, scared by the shorn spot to which Fr. Burke pointed, went away resolving to make his conquest without the vain aid he had contemplated.

A reporter, gifted with graphic power in description, but who had never mastered the science of stenography, had long been attached to a leading journal. Whenever Fr. Burke preached he waited on him with a request to commit to

writing an abstract of his sermon. A brother Dominican has often seen him start, when prostrate after the labours of the day, on hearing the announcement that Mr. —— was below. He would rather make a pilgrimage with peas in his shoes to Lough Dearg than re-travel with pen the ground orally gone over; 'it took more out of him,' he said, 'than half a dozen sermons.' But he was so amiable that he would generally do violence to his feelings and act as desired. It was about this time that the services of Father Burke were enlisted to preach at St. Catherine's, Meath Street, on the occasion of opening a new organ. A most interesting sermon was expected, and Fr. Burke had previously promised to prepare a vigorous outline for the reporter. The discourse surpassed expectation, and at its conclusion the preacher was informed that the pressman awaited the MS. But Fr. Burke had forgotten all about it, and declared to his dismay that he could not possibly find time to supply it even then. Matters were beginning to look awkward, when the Rev. James Daniel undertook to represent to the preacher that if no report appeared next day it would occasion comment and possibly cost the reporter his place. 'I have now to go to Rathfarnham to hear the confessions of the nuns,' replied Fr. Burke, 'and as I must return here by six to meet the parish priest and his guests at dinner, you will see that with every disposition to oblige it is wholly impossible.' The tact of Fr. Daniel smoothed the difficulty. He proposed to follow Fr. Burke by car to Loretto, and there to take down from his lips a *réchauffé* of the sermon that had just delighted Dublin. The preacher assented. Fr. Daniel repaired to Rathfarnham. There, in a few detached intervals between the confessions he heard, and the whispered instructions offered, Fr. Burke, in a room usually allotted to his use, re-delivered to empty chairs the coveted oration. Next morning 'Fr. Burke's last sermon,' strengthened in its process of regeneration, was duly given to the world.

'I heard something in your last sermon which I never heard before,' a prelate once said; but when asked what it was, replied, 'I heard the clock strike twice.' Instead of delicate hints like this it is customary in some churches to sound an alarm bell whenever any of the curates whose turn it was to preach exceeded the limits prescribed by the Council of Trent. On the occasion of one of Burke's finest sermons in Meath Street, an active cleric, opining that he had spoken long enough, disconcerted everyone, except the preacher, by sounding the alarm.

He had been advertised to preach at Blackrock, near Dublin, and, being the season when people frequent the seaside, a great audience gathered. The hour arrived, but not the preacher. At last a carriage dashed over the gravel into the chapel-yard. Fr. Burke hastily explained how he had been finishing a retreat at Rathfarnham. But a bishop who officiated at a function with which it wound up had illustrated the saying, 'Great people move slowly.' And had not Mr. Talbot Power placed his blood horses at Fr. Burke's disposal there would have been no sermon at Blackrock that day.

In a small bright room off the Loretto Chapel, Fr. Burke heard for many years the confessions of the nuns. He sat in a plain oak chair with his back to what was seemingly a partition, but which consisted of a cross-barred brass lattice, within which was stretched and secured a large sheet of green silk. Through this rigid barrier the person who knelt behind could not be recognised. The community embraces at least one hundred nuns and novices. Three whispered words from each 'penitent'—as even saints in confession are technically styled—sufficed to tell Fr. Burke which of his spiritual children was there. Each particular case, with all its little joys and sorrows, he knew as thoroughly as though it were his own; and the aged nun who told us this adds that in six words he was able to afford as much consolation and counsel as would take any ordinary confessor half an hour.

CHAPTER VII.

CARDINAL CULLEN AND COMEDY.

IT was about this time that Fr. Burke first undertook the perilous game of mimicking Cardinal Cullen. On the first occasion that he attempted it he was rather taken aback by the Cardinal suddenly coming behind him, asking, 'Whose speech was this?' Fr. Burke in reply muttered something about the Bishop of Peterborough. 'And what does he say?' 'He says he has got no dogma, my Lord.'[1] 'And he's right,' proceeded the Cardinal, turning away satisfied. Later on his Eminence became so fond of Burke that the latter could take what liberties he liked with him. 'Come up here, Fr. Burke, and tell some of your funny stories,' was almost a stereotyped invitation when dinner and grace had concluded. But Burke held his head higher than that of the mere Court jester; and his opinion was often invited on questions of gravity. Fr. Burke, in his panegyric on Cardinal Cullen—at the Pro-Cathedral, Dublin—described 'his days spent in labour of mind and body with scarcely a shadow of relaxation, nights of which the greater part was given to toil, prayer, and study.' And in the same sermon he referred to 'his cheerfulness and joyousness, which is the inheritance of the pure of heart.'

Fr. Burke would sing for the Archbishop several songs, part of whose piquancy was due to the fact that the author

[1] Fr. Burke, in his lecture on 'The Promise of Christ Fulfilled,' says that the bishop's words were, 'It is the proudest boast of our Church of England that she has no dogma'—that is to say, no fixed form of opinion. 'I do not harbour a thought, much less express it,' added Burke, 'which would be painful or disrespectful to any man.'

always refused to supply a copy of the words. These included 'The Lower Castle Yard,' and a song illustrating the results of a proselytising lady's crusade. At Kingstown there is an institute called 'The Bird's Nest':

Her child she sold for paltry gold,
To Kingstown he did go, ma'am,
From the mother's breast to the vulture's nest,
The robin will soon be a crow, ma'am.

Another lyric was devoted to recording the vicissitudes of a cook, 'Hanna McGorman.' This wild doggerel was set to a most peculiar tune which seemed to include three airs. In singing it Fr. Burke was at his best. The climax went on to record, if we correctly remember:

As she rode into Tralee town
Upon a horse of high renown,
The night being dark she sliddered down
And fell behind a tradesman.

One evening Dr. Cullen, in his usual matter-of-fact manner, asked, 'And what became of her then?' 'Oh, she went into the workhouse and died, my Lord.' 'I hope she received the last rites of the Church,' the Archbishop said, in a half-abstracted way, and true to official instincts. Having heard 'Hanna McGorman' on a subsequent occasion sung, he said, 'That is a very strange song; it has neither beginning nor end to it.' All who knew this great hierarch will pardon these traits of his simplicity.

The song called 'The Lower Castle Yard,' which Fr. Burke used to sing for Cardinal Cullen, was written under the following circumstances. A printer of Quilp-like aspect, named Nugent, published for many years in Cook Street an almanac highly seditious in tone and filled with strictures on Dublin Castle, the seat of Viceregal government. He was at last summoned to show cause why information should not be taken against him, and returned for trial. Then it was that

the melancholy muse was wooed by a supposed street ballad-singer.

'Oh, Wirra! Wirrasthrue,' says she,
'Sure Dublin's noblest bard
Is tuck before his tyrants
In the Lower Castle Yard.'

The prisoner's counsel, Mr. Curran, however, having offered to give sureties for his client's appearance if the Crown desired to continue the prosecution, the proposal was agreed to, and Mr. Porter, the police magistrate, dismissed the case.

So good luck to Frank Thorpe Porter,
That expounder of the laws,
Likewise to Adye Curran,
Who was counsel in the cause.
They tanned the hide of long Whiteside
And did him disregard,
And freed our printer from his fangs,
In the Lower Castle Yard.

A Viceregal A.D.C. drove up to Nugent's door in Cook Street, and asked for a copy of this song. 'Go to ——,' was the reply, naming a region even less inviting than Cook Street. 'I that have defied three Governments in their efforts to snuff me out, am I to be bearded in my den by a flunkey like you?'

Authentic stories are told of Fr. Tom's practical joking, before which the pranks of Hook and Lever pale. An American Bishop arrived at Cork in the midst of the fuss incidental to the opening of a new bridge. Travelling by rail to Dublin, desiring information regarding the country through which he passed, and having but a few days at his disposal to see it, his Lordship addressed himself to a solemn-looking priest who sat opposite. This was Fr. Burke, and the opportunity for a practical joke was too tempting to resist. 'Yonder,' he said, 'is the Gap of Dunloe, to the left is the Giant's Causeway, with its endless pillars of basalt; Vinegar Hill rises to

the right, and between its base and the Sugar-loaf the waters of Lough Neagh stretch forth their broad expanse of blue.' The Bishop's eyes glistened as they followed with vivid interest the storied panorama. A sheet of water was pointed out as Killarney, and, when passing a bog on which a ray of sickly sunshine fell, the Bishop, in reply to a polite query, was told, 'Oh, that is the valley lay smiling before me.' 'And these military,' said the Bishop, 'how is it that at every station we pass a detachment is drawn up?' Fr. Burke conveyed that it was to do his Lordship honour, though the real fact was that the Viceroy had been expected to open with due pomp the new bridge in Cork. On they went, travelling 'from pole to pole,' until, entering the Archdiocese of Cashel, a castle caught the Bishop's eye. 'That, my Lord, is the Castle of Thurles,' said Fr. Burke, as indeed it was, 'the great stronghold of the Cullens in days of yore,' which of course it was not. 'The patrimony of Thurles is still held by the present representative of the race, Paul Cullen.'

'And that structure crowning yonder hill,' said the Bishop, 'pray what might that be?' 'The hill and hall of Tara.' 'Wonderfully good state of repair,' said the Bishop. 'Yes—we wish to preserve such things as historic memorials.' It was the workhouse.

So charmed was the stranger that he ascribed to some more than blessed accident the good fortune which brought him face to face with so bright a cicerone, and when at last they were compelled to separate, his expressions of gratitude were loud and warm. 'To whom am I indebted for so much pleasure and information?' said the prelate. 'Fr. Amherst,' was the meek reply. Meanwhile his Lordship, on arrival in Dublin, was asked by Cardinal Cullen how he liked Cork and such glimpses of the country as he had been able to obtain. He replied that he had already seen every object of interest in Ireland, including the patrimony of the Cullens, and that he owed all to the assistance of a priest whom he had

casually met. 'I suspect I know the gentleman,' said Cardinal Cullen. The version usually given of this story goes on to say that presently the door opened, and 'the Rev. Thomas Burke' was sonorously announced, while almost at the same moment the welcome news that dinner was served averted the awkwardness of a presentation.

Some say that their second meeting took place not in Dublin, but the following year in Rome during the Vatican Council. The American Bishop had felt deeply hurt by the trick; and Cardinal Cullen, whether to reconcile the two men, or for the humour of the thing, brought them together.

'Think not my spirits are always as light,' was as true in Burke's case as in Moore's. Their second meeting is said to have been one of the few instances in which Burke collapsed, though he was afterwards able to amuse social audiences with a graphic account of the whole adventure. He left Cardinal Cullen's table early, whispering to a friend that this was about the most practical retreat he had ever conducted. It was Fr. Burke's fate to meet this prelate again in America, and we regret to add that a reconciliation never became complete.[1]

Burke on another occasion, when travelling by rail from Dublin to Cork, personated a German professor of languages, and in that character conversed all the way with some affable cosmopolites.

Fr. Burke one day observed in a toy-shop a demi-mask so like the Père Jandel, Master-General of his Order, that he at once secured it. A pair of spectacles increased the resemblance; and when a Fr. Villaraso, O.P., visited Tallaght, Fr. Burke entered the room where he sat, and, personating the general, conversed with him for some time in French without awakening suspicion. On another occasion, at night, a lay brother in charge of the hall door escorted the fictitious general downstairs, and held a light to show him the way.

[1] The above is compiled from the recollections preserved by various priests who heard Burke himself tell the story.

Some of the greatest minds have not hesitated to concoct similar amusement. In the 'Life of the Rev. Sydney Smith'[1] such things may be found; and many practical jokes are recorded as having been played by Sir James Mackintosh, Dickens, and Moore—not to speak of Hook and Lever.

From what has been already stated, it hardly needs to say that Cardinal Cullen and Burke continued good friends. For many years no banquet took place at the Archiepiscopal Palace which Burke was not asked to grace and enliven. The Cardinal liked genius and wit in a priest, provided that he who bore both was a humble man. Swagger he snubbed. But Burke was humility itself, and innocent as a child. The endless adulation he received only made him think the less of himself. In this fact is found the secret of Cardinal Cullen's affection for him. This prelate, borne down with care, worry, and work, as he often was, found it a real relief to listen to Fr. Tom pour forth his exhaustless stream of humour; and so intimate did they become that many persons have seen Burke mimic him in his own presence. This may have been permitted for another reason besides that found in

[1] Lady Holland describes Sir James Mackintosh bringing with him as a guest to the Rev. Sydney Smith's a young Scotch officer. Sir James passed off the future Canon of St. Paul's as Sir Sidney Smith, the hero of Acre. 'Giving Mr. Smith the hint, he instantly assumed the military character, performed the hero of Acre to perfection, fought all his battles over again, and showed how he had charged the Turks, to the infinite delight of the young Scotchman, who was quite enchanted with the condescension of "the great Sir Sudney," and to the torture of the other guests, who were bursting with suppressed laughter. Nothing would serve the young Highlander but setting off at midnight to fetch the piper of his regiment to pipe to "Sir Sudney," who said he had never heard the bagpipes; upon this the party broke up instantly, for Sir James said his Scotch cousin would surely cut his throat if he discovered his mistake. A few days afterwards Sir James Mackintosh and his Scotch cousin met Mr. Sydney Smith with his wife on his arm. He introduced her, upon which the cousin said in a low tone, "I did na ken the great Sir Sudney was married." "Why, no," said Sir James, a little embarrassed, "not ex-act-ly—married—only an Egyptian slave he brought over; Fatima—you know." Mrs. Smith was long known in the little circle as Fatima.' Moore's *Diary* (v. 300) describes the subsequent Chief Justice Doherty and Sir P. Crampton, armed with squirts, lying in wait until the coaches were starting, Crampton saying, 'Reserve your fire till the coachman says "All right!" and then I'll take the front outside passengers and you the hind ones.'

the winning humility of the man. It is related in one of Fr. Segneri's sermons that a grand cavalier of Lombardy was stalking through the streets of Milan, when a snow-ball struck him. The blood mounted to his cheeks, and, grasping his sword, he turned to resent the insult. But, finding that it came from a lady whom he had known and loved, he was quite flattered by the attention.

Canon Walter Murphy was a man so precise and natty that Fr. Tom in his stories often made him the polished peg whereon to hang them. Archbishop Cullen, from his long residence in Italy, was always amused by Fr. Burke's pictures of Italian life, including that of the quack dentist from Tuscany, who with falsetto voice and bray of trumpet drives down the Piazza di San Agnesi at Rome, and implores all sufferers to submit to his muscular arm. Burke has described before a roomful Canon Murphy sitting down in the piazza and abandoning himself to the small mercies of the dentist, who meanwhile would try to encourage his patient by exhibiting a bag crammed with trophy tusks, including the tooth of Melchisedech. The dialogue in mingled Italian and French was very comically given. At last Burke, starting up, would get behind the Canon's chair, and, holding his chin, seem to extract the peccant member. The glitter of a dessert knife suggested a forceps, and at last the climax came in the exhibition of something like a tusk, but which was part of the ivory handle, disclosed by sleight of hand while the rest lay concealed. Once, when asked to give this performance, he complied, saying that 'he was an old hand at the *stump*.' If no one chanced to be present on whom he cared to operate, he used a loaf of bread as the skull, previously surrounding it with a napkin.

This was a performance for which Fr. Tom was often asked. Owing, however, to the exhaustive style in which he gave it, the effort proved a more serious tax on his strength than a Good Friday sermon.

But once begun (writes an English Dominican), Fr. Burke in his excitement has been known to seize the first head which came to his hand, and he had been operating on an eminent Cardinal for a minute before he became fully alive to the temerity of his act; but his Eminence took the thing well, and laughed as heartily as any of them.

When the dentist's patient was a willing confederate, it always bettered the effect. Fr. Burke said that an Hon. and Right Rev. Prelate was his best ally, because he always knew the right moment to scream.

Among other Italian studies was that of the *Improvisatore*; the man playing on the mandoline; and the Roman barber. Fr. Burke, as he put his dinner-napkin round the neck of some willing victim and feigned to shave him, accompanied the operation with an oral torrent of news about the Pope and cardinals—all, of course, in the vernacular tongue. But his *répertoire* included local portraits too.

Some years ago a blind beggar and his dog daily took up position in Nassau Street, Dublin. The man played doleful airs upon a tin whistle, and the dog held in his mouth a small bag for coin. 'Tip' was quite as great a character as his master. Burke amused social circles by portraying both. Some of the time he was posed as the dog begging, his hands hanging down like paws, his face now one of perfect canine expressiveness, and he did not hesitate to hold between his teeth the little skull-cap of his Order. Next moment he changed into the blind man, discoursing music from a flute.

Another mimicry was that of Zozimus. But Burke had never seen Zozimus, and his performance, however pleasant, was merely an imitation of an imitation. Fr. Tom was greatly amused at seeing the thing done by a brother humourist, and in this instance the pupil surpassed the master.

Zozimus was the *sobriquet* of a 'beggar' vocalist and lecturer named Moran, who thirty years ago boasted that he walked in the footsteps of Homer, and was as well known in

Dublin as Nelson's Pillar. What old citizen does not remember that tall, gaunt, blind man, dressed in a heavy long-tailed coat and a dinged high hat, armed with a blackthorn stick secured to his wrist by a thong and finished by an iron ferule? His upturned face displayed the whites of sightless eyes; his boldly marked facial muscles gave decision to his aspect; his guttural voice often highly sonorous—his Dublin brogue, rich and mellifluous—accompanied by a strange lisp on special words—tempted mimics to go and do likewise. Evening after evening Zozimus made his pilgrimage through the streets, advancing with slow and measured steps, and halting at intervals to collect in a hat, whose crown frequently let coin escape, the alms of the faithful. The dirty man often seemed ill at ease during his recitals, and by way of explanation said, 'My buzzom friends have become my backbiters.' His great popular recitation was 'The Life, Conversion, and Death of St. Mary of Egypt, who was discovered in the Wilderness in the fifth century by the pious Zozimus.' This extraordinary poem, compiled from the 'Acta Sanctorum,' was written in the last century by Dr. Coyle, Bishop of Raphoe, and opened with some notice of the imperial throne of Theodosius, a holy hermit in Palestine—

> Whose shining virtues and extensive fame
> The world astonished—Zozimus his name.

Other versions of the poem were given by our Dublin street bard, including—

> On Egypt's plains, where flows the ancient Nile,
> Where ibex stalks, and swims the crocodile.

And which in due time became most sacrilegiously parodied.

Not the least amusing part of the man's recital had been its frequent interruption by 'jackeens,' and by his own threats to 'cut the ships from undher them if they didn't stop their irreverent devarshion.' When making a halt, he would

cry, 'Gather round me, good Christians. Am I standin' in puddle?' They would lead him to a dry spot; but too often tricks were played which again made him threaten, 'If you don't give over I'll leave some of yez a case. You all remember what St. Paul said in his Epistle to the Romans (for he never wrote to the Protestants): "A halfpenny won't make you or break you."' He would then resume his 'full, true, and particular account of the career, severe penance, privations, and miraculous conversion of St. Mary of Egypt—blessed be her holy name.'[1]

Fr. Burke would sometimes change to another well-known beggar by pulling down over his eyes his small skull-cap to represent a shade, and grasping by both hands a blackthorn stick.

At other times types of character rather than individuals were depicted, including news-boys shouting in the streets exaggerated versions of alleged sensation incidents, with which Dr. Cullen's name somehow generally got mixed up.

Gloomy men condemned Fr. Tom's exhaustless mirth. They failed to see the motives that prompted it and the benefits it produced. Such men should weigh the words of him who said:

I know of nothing equal to a cheerful and even mirthful conversation for restoring the tone of mind and body, when both have been overdone. Some great and good men, on whom very heavy cares and toils have been laid, manifest a constitutional tendency to relax into mirth when their work is over. Narrow minds

[1] Zozimus had been always a favourite 'part' with local wags, and it is on record that a sham 'Zoz' once took his rounds on the same night as the real man, and created quite a sensation on Essex Bridge, where both met and their sonorous tones mingled, to the confusion of their respective followers. On this occasion the real man called the other an 'impostherer,' but the latter gave back the epithet, and touchingly complained of the heartlessness of mocking a poor dark man. Words ran high, and the sham 'Zoz' said, 'Good Christians, just give me a grip of that villain, and I'll soon let him know who the real "impostherer" is.' Then pretending to give his victim a 'guzzler,' he pressed some silver into his hand and vanished.

denounce the incongruity; large hearts own God's goodness in the fact, and rejoice in the wise provision made for prolonging useful lives. Mirth after exhaustive toil is one of nature's instinctive efforts to heal the part which has been racked or bruised. You cannot too sternly reprobate a frivolous life; but if the life be earnest for God or man, with here and there a layer of mirthfulness protruding, a soft bedding to receive heavy cares which otherwise would crush the spirit, to snarl against the sports of mirth may be the easy and useless occupation of a small man, who cannot take in at one view the whole circumference of a large one.

Years went on. The Cardinal drudged through his daily toil, and the brilliant Dominican stood at his side. We well remember that during the distribution of prizes at the Carmelite College Fr. Burke whispered his jokes to such purpose—especially when punning on the name of one applicant—that his Eminence was unable from laughing to articulate the formal words which it became his duty to offer.

An alderman was fond of giving full-dress *soirées musicales*. Their great attraction was Fr. Burke, but too soon came his whispered adieu, saying it was time for the Cinderellas to leave. On one occasion here he gave, with other things, imitations of a mendicant family whom he had often heard sing in the streets of Rome. The voices of father, mother, and daughter, the last a real alto, were powerfully given, accompanied by the twang of three distinct instruments on which they played. The father's blindness Burke imitated by throwing his eye-balls seemingly into the back of his head, and exhibiting while he sang nought but whites.

He also often amused the Jesuit Fathers with these freaks, and they assure us that 'in portraying the singing family, and especially in the change of features, one could almost swear that several persons were engaged in giving the performance.' Another was that of a troubadour serenading his love. Near the convent in which some years of his life were spent in Italy lived a Juliet, who was occasionally brought to

her casement by the 'Com' è gentil' of a love-sick swain. It was a rich scene when Burke, at some clerical party, struck up on a tongs or bread-basket, if no guitar was at hand, a 'tum-tum' accompaniment to his bursts of passionate melody.

These things are nothing when told in print. All their merit was due to Burke's marvellous mobility of features and play of hands, not to speak of his ventriloquial gifts. But some of his friends expect that a record of them should be made, and we pretend to give little more than a dry list.

Among the songs that Fr. Burke sang at this time were 'Finegan's Wake,' 'Scroggins's Ghost,' and the 'Galliant Hussar.' The Irish melodies, of course, had their turn; but he was equally good at English lyrics, and nobody surpassed Fr. Tom in the feeling and force with which he rendered 'Tom Bowling' and 'All's Well.'

When Prior of Tallaght, he was very intimate with a family who lived at Ardavon, a picturesque retreat overhanging the river Dodder. Its proximity to Loretto made it specially convenient to him. His rule rarely allowed him to dine out, but his evenings were frequently given to the society of that genial family. Here he would sing, both in comic and sentimental vein, accompanying himself on the piano with a touch worthy of the Abbé Liszt. One of the best of the more touching lyrics was, 'What are the Wild Waves saying?'—suggested by the story of Paul Dombey.

When the librettist of 'Patience' introduced that marvellous litany of jarring and incongruous names, including Thomas Aquinas and Anthony Trollope, the association was not so absurd after all. If Fr. Burke, at Tallaght, gave his mornings to Thomas Aquinas, he gave his evenings to Anthony Trollope. His favourite story was 'Barchester Towers,' which the novelist himself used to tell had been written entirely in the train. But the 'Ingoldsby Legends,' by the Rev. R. H. Barham, was his sovereign antidote for blue devils. How often has he amused his friends, and

sometimes his novices, in their hours of play, by reading for them, with rare elocutionary tricks, 'The Jackdaw of Rheims,' 'The Lay of St. Aloys,' 'The Legend of Palestine,' 'Roger the Monk,' or 'The Ingoldsby Penance,' and 'My Lord Tom Noddy!' He greatly liked the 'Copperfield' of Dickens, and confessed that over many passages in it he had often wept. This was no exaggeration. He was at all times as easily moved as his own audiences. A brother Dominican, Fr. Kenny, has seen him weep when reciting the 'Morte d'Arthur' of Tennyson.

But Fr. Burke, though an omnivorous reader up to a certain period of his life, finally held this appetite in check. Among the notes supplied for our use by Mrs. Grehan, from whom we shall have frequent occasion to quote hereafter, are the following:

Once in a severe fit of illness he was given Trollope's tale of the 'Three Clerks' to read. He liked it much. 'Though I was in such agony this morning,' he said, 'I could not help laughing out loud over poor Charlie's first effort of genius. Then he read out passages in the most amusing manner. But in another book by the same writer he was quite horrified that one of the heroines, while engaged to a particular man, tried to captivate another. 'Do you tell me,' he said indignantly, 'that such things can take place in society?' This suggested a train of most beautiful thoughts on the sanctity of the tie of betrothal, and what ought to be its good effect on the character, even of persons not actually religious. Afterwards he seemed to scruple this innocent recreation. 'I had been reading a harrowing story,' he said; 'and it would come into my head in my prayers—in and out like the teeth of a saw. No, it is impossible to combine novel-reading and mental prayer. My poor mother had only one weakness, and that was a good novel. Up to the age of fifty she would read it if it came in her way, and then would fling it aside with anger at having so wasted her time.'

Fr. Burke did something as a magazine writer and reviewer at this time. We can particularly identify a paper in the 'Hibernian Magazine' for April 1864 as his, which opens with a feeling reference 'to the dear child of genius

just dead—Adelaide Proctor.' This paper shows how familiar he was with poetic literature generally. Scott's 'Marmion' and Dante's 'Inferno' are both noticed. Fr. Burke remarks that a Cork poet, Mr. Condon, had rendered into English, with much fidelity, 'the rhyme and metre, the turn of thought and phrase of the great Florentine,' and he hoped that the entire 'Divina Commedia' would soon be translated. This poet was the brother of one of his favourite novices.

On Sunday, May 29, 1864, was laid the first stone of the new convent of the Irish Novitiate House at Tallaght. While the Provincial handled the trowel, Fr. Burke embedded the earthenware vessel containing coins and a parchment record. He preached the sermon on the occasion, and a modest record states 'that while Frs. Condon and Verdon sang the Mass "De Angelis," Fr. Burke presided at the harmonium.' To some it seemed a sad coincidence that it was in this house that the founder should find his death-bed. But Fr. Burke became so fond of Tallaght that, during his wanderings in other lands, in broken health, and often depressed in spirits, he compared himself to the hare panting to the spot from whence it fled, and there lying down to die.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRIOR OF SAN CLEMENTE, ROME.

THERE is no virtue more manly and ennobling (said Fr. Burke, when preaching on the Second Beatitude) than that which enables a man to govern himself and his own passions. How can a man rule others who is unable to rule himself? How can a man associate with others who is powerless and unable to live with his own soul in peace? He truly is fitted to be an Anax Andrôn—a king of men—who has learned by meekness to keep the little kingdom of his own soul and body in the proper order of subjection to reason. Every virtue is a power—the very word 'virtue' means power—and what is more terrible in its power than meekness?

Fr. Burke's colleagues saw that he possessed in an eminent degree these latter gifts. Therefore the young man was entrusted with the duty of ruling others. In obedience to the voice of authority, he once more prepared to leave his native land, and take up the reins of government as prior of the oldest Basilica in Rome. But it was a spot consecrated in his eyes by glorious memories of those old Irish Dominicans, on whose trials and triumphs he loved to enlarge; and with a light heart he entered on his work.

Since 1667, when San Clemente had been handed over to the white-robed preachers, it had been always a centre of that culture for which they are distinguished. Here two very remarkable Irishmen had already held office—Thomas Burke, or De Burgho, Bishop of Ossory, author of the 'Hibernia Dominicana,' and John Thomas Troy, Archbishop of Dublin.

The Very Rev. P. V. Kenny, late Prior of St. Saviour's,

Limerick, and now Fr. Vicar of St. Mary's, Tallaght, has communicated to us for insertion the following details of the journey to Rome :—

In September 1864 Fr. Burke was appointed by the late Master-General of the Order, the Most Rev. Fr. A. V. Jandel, Rector of the Irish Dominican College of San Clemente, Rome. He was also appointed to the office of Master of Professed Novices or Students, and Lector in the Second Part of the Summa of St. Thomas of Acquin. This latter post he held at San Clemente for two years. On September 20 he set out for the Eternal City, taking with him four students—Brs. V. Hood, A. Wheeler, D. Molloy, and P. V. Kenny. Fr. Conway, O.P., of Cork, and Fr. M. Lynch, O.P., of Tralee, accompanied him. Fr. Burke had charge also of two nuns of Loretto Convent, Rathfarnham, who were going to spend the winter at Cannes.

All were seated in the train at Holyhead, when a man came to the door, and, although the carriage seemed full, forced himself in. Fr. Burke offered some slight objection, but the traveller replied that he had paid for his seat as well as he. Fr. Burke addressed the novices in Latin, after which he proclaimed profound silence. Opening his breviary, he read for an hour, and then, with the most solemn of faces, proceeded to stare at his *vis-à-vis*. The man thought that he had got among a lot of lunatics, and, ere the train had fully stopped, sprang upon the platform.

It may be premised that 'Quarter Tense,' or Ember Days, is a period of severe fast with Catholics. Fr. Kenny continues :

It was the Vigil of the Feast of St. Matthew Ap. and Quatuor Tense. We took nothing for breakfast but a cup of tea and a little bread, so that when we arrived in Holyhead, after four hours' sail, our appetites were pretty sharp. They were destined to remain so, as we could not get meagre fare at the railway hotel there. The tedious run to London, therefore, was by no means a pleasant trip. We put up at Ford's, in Manchester Square, and next day went to the Foreign Office to procure our passports. It was with no little difficulty we succeeded, being quite unknown in those quarters. We visited Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's, and the Houses of Parliament.

In the Commons we saw Prince Humbert, now King of Italy. I shall never forget his hollow, delicate, and apparently careworn appearance. You would not give a year's purchase for his life.

We crossed over to France *viâ* Newhaven and Dieppe in a very bad boat. Nearly every one on board was sick. In Paris we stayed at the Vatican Hotel, which Fr. Burke failed to recommend to future *voyageurs*, saying that there is very little in a *name*. Next day we went to our Convent of the Carmes, Rue Vaugirard. Here Fr. Burke made the acquaintance of Fr. Monsabré, the great preacher of Notre Dame, and a friendship sprang up between them which nothing but death could sever. They had gifts in common. Both were sons of St. Dominic, great preachers, great humourists, and great, too, in their deep humility. We spent Sunday in Paris. Fr. Monsabré preached in our church. Fr. Burke was struck by the fact that the audience *were all women*—not a man in the vast building. The following day Fr. Burke took the students to a hatter's to procure Roman or long clerical hats for them. He was told by the Fathers of the convent that the hatter lived in the *Rue du Cherche-Midi*. Fr. Burke forgot *Rue*, so we spent the whole day walking through Paris looking for Cherche Midi. Often did he stop to ask where was Cherche Midi. 'Cherche Midi ! je ne sais pas, monsieur,' was the usual answer. Addressing a gendarme, Fr. Burke said, 'Je cherche le Cherche Midi.' The alliteration tickled the oracle in the cocked hat so completely that 'his moustache went up and his nose went down.' At last, happening to meet an Englishman well acquainted with Paris, he put to him the usual question, and received for reply, 'You are in it, and the hatter you want lives two doors from where you stand.' The Fathers of the convent had a good laugh at us when we returned late in the evening, quite tired, searching for *Cherche Midi*.

We left Paris for Lyons, and here another mistake occurred. Fr. Burke had omitted to write to the Fathers of our convent that they might expect us; so when we arrived late at night they had retired to rest. We knocked and knocked at the door, but all in vain. At last, making all the noise we could for nearly half an hour, a lay brother appeared and let us in. The Fathers got us some supper, and as they had made no preparation for our arrival, we had to go to the nearest hotel for the night. The Prior sent a lay brother with us to show us the way, for we had long since dismissed our drivers. On our way to the hotel we came suddenly on a travelling menagerie, the showman holding forth to a vast crowd of the lowest class in Lyons. Seeing

a number of Religious in their white and black habits walking through the streets at eleven o'clock at night was something new to them, and stranger than the menagerie, for they immediately left the showman and his wild animals and followed us to the hotel, shouting all the way and uttering severe threats. The hotel-keeper had great difficulty in keeping them from bursting into his hotel. This was our first taste of a French mob, and it was not a pleasant one.[1] We left next day for Marseilles. We stayed for some short time at our convent there, and visited Notre Dame de la Garde. The weather was fearfully hot, and we suffered very much ascending the hill to the sanctuary. Fr. Burke went from Marseilles to our convent at St. Maximius, in the Department of Var, for three Irish Dominican students whom he was to take with him to Rome. Their names were Brs. P. Power, D. Slattery, and V. Prendergast. The journey was made in a *diligence*. Coming back with the students, he found that every place in the inside of the coach was occupied; so there was nothing for it but to mount on the top and make the best of it. It was late in the evening when they left St. Maximius. The night was fine; so covering themselves with some oil-cloths, and making a pillow of a big dog they found there—a gentle drowsy beast—they went to sleep and did not awake until they found themselves next morning in Marseilles.

Thursday evening we sailed from Marseilles, and touched at Genoa next day, where the steamer remained eight hours. We disembarked and visited the 'City of Palaces' and churches, and saw nearly all that is worth seeing in 'Genoa the Proud.' In the evening we left the port and arrived next day at Leghorn. The steamer would wait for some six or seven hours, so Fr. Conway, Br. P. Power, and Br. P. V. Kenny resolved to take a drive to Pisa, about eight miles off, and see the Duomo, the Campo Santo, Leaning Tower, and Baptistery. It was a lovely day, and the ride was most enjoyable. Fr. Burke was amused at my astonishment to see a man ploughing with a yoke of oxen, and holding the plough with one hand, whilst with the other he held a large green umbrella over his head to shade himself from the hot sun. It was the first time I had seen an Italian plough, which a man could easily carry under his arm. We left Leghorn in the evening and arrived in the Papal harbour of Civita Vecchia on Sunday morning. We immediately disembarked and went to hear Mass at our church in the city. About twelve o'clock

[1] The brutal spirit shown to Fr. Burke and his novices culminated, not long after, in the massacre, by the Commune, of the Dominican Fathers at Paris.

we took the train for Rome. After dinner at San Clemente we went to pay our respects to the General at the convent of the Minerva, and were just in time to see the great procession of the Holy Rosary pass into our church.

The Nuncio at Paris had said to Fr. Burke, 'I would wish to entrust to your care some despatches for Cardinal Antonelli—place them under your head every night until you reach Rome.' On arrival he proceeded with Fr. Mullooly to the Vatican. Fr. Mullooly remained in an ante-room while Antonelli took Fr. Burke into an adjoining *salon*, of which he closed the door. The Cardinal's servant, unconscious that he was watched by Mullooly, placed his ear at the keyhole, while his Eminence conversed with Fr. Burke. Fr. Mullooly reported the circumstance to the cardinal, who subsequently discovered the man to be a spy in the pay of the Sardinian Minister.

It was on Rosary Sunday, 1864, that Fr. Burke entered on his duties as Prior of San Clemente. Everything connected with that devotion attracted him. The beads were never from his side by day; he wore them round his neck at night.[1] His new church at Tallaght he dedicated to Holy Mary of the Rosary.

The following letter, addressed to an old lady who had been already the favoured correspondent of Bishop Doyle, is about the longest that Fr. Burke was ever known to write. The idea expressed, that he was not to preach for the next three years, proved, as will be seen, delusive. His 'dear children of Rathfarnham' means the nuns of Loretto:

San Clemente, Rome: November 12, 1864.

I.M.D.

My dear Mrs. Jones,—Your kind letter was the first and only one I got since my arrival in the Eternal City. It gave me very great

[1] The use of beads, as a help to memory in reciting prayers, is so old a practice that we find the monk Paul in Pherme holding 300 pebbles in his lap, and casting them away one by one as each orison ended. This is recorded by Palladius in the fifth century.

pleasure, for which I thank you most sincerely. It was so kind of you to think of the poor 'exile of Erin,' and to send me such good and welcome news about my dear children of Rathfarnham, &c. &c. Well, we got safe to Rome—no accidents—no banditti—no sickness. All—even Fr. Conway, who is so hard to please—enjoyed their journey, more especially after we got into Burgundy and the South of France. The weather was delightful. Since my arrival in Rome I have given myself up altogether to fasting and mortification, and I am become already so spiritualised that there is a project mooted to run my head into a tub of plaster of Paris to serve as a model of St. Bernard. Wouldn't it be delightful? If the idea be carried out, I'll send you a nice little bust to put on the chimneypiece in your own room, and when your lady friends visit you, you can take the favoured ones to see it, and they will turn up the whites of their eyes and say, 'Ah! there he is!' Now to be serious. I said my first nine masses in Rome for you, as I promised, and I make the express memento for you, which I also promised. I cannot say the other masses which you ask, for the following reason. There is a great multitude of obligatory masses attached to this convent, and one of the rules of the house is, that each priest celebrate for the house every day and enter his mass in the sacristy book. Of course a man is allowed now and then to apply his mass for a private intention, but this very rarely. Now, if I were to say so many private masses, being prior of the house, the other priests might think it unfair to be so exacting on them; so, you see, *noblesse oblige.* I must first do myself, and then only can I call upon others to do. This rule extends to everything else as well as to the masses, and so my life here just now is what you would call hard enough; but, thank God, I am in rude health, and able for it. My appetite is wonderfully improved; my cough is gone, and I have not had any necessity to wear the red flannel as yet, but it will stand well to me in the winter, which promises to be severe in Rome this year. Well, now that I have done with my detestable self, let me ask how *you* are. I hope well in mind and body, living an interior life of patience, prayer, and union with God. I'm sorry for Kate that Fr. Eustace was so hard about the music. As for your enjoyment of the matter, you can do without it; you have not much enjoyment, but neither have you much labour; not like poor Kate, who would require a little treat and relaxation, poor child.[1] You can offer all such

[1] The sister of Mrs. Jones had become the wife of Vincent Wallace the composer, but the marriage failed to prove a happy one; Wallace was a Protestant,

privations to God; and, without some such mortification, I don't see how you can come up to all that God justly expects of you. Think how little of this world's joys the Virgin Mother tasted, and how great her joy was on earth, notwithstanding all her sorrows, and how great her glory is to-day. Now, don't be afraid, I'm not going to preach. I have given up preaching for the next three years. The Sundays appear so queer to me—no congregations—no sermon. I intend to get into the pulpit some day, when the church is closed, and bawl out a bit, just for 'Auld lang syne.' I inclose you the copy of Fr. Justin's request, and I hope that you will be successful in helping poor dear Tallaght. Please to give my kindest regards to Mrs. James and my young friends. When I get an opportunity I will send you some little souvenir blessed by the Holy Father. Pray for me, and believe me sincerely and affectionately yours in Christ,

BR. THOMAS BURKE, O.P.

Fr. Conway is well and desires to be remembered.

The Prior's humility is shown by signing his name after the manner of a lay brother.

The project to make him sit for a bust of St. Bernard claims explanation. Fr. Burke had been asked by Mr. Warrington Wood,[1] the sculptor, to afford facilities for a study of his head. The compliment was conveyed to Fr. Burke in terms so flattering that his friends in Ireland failed to gather the extent of it from the misleading remark he dropped. Indeed it was regarded as one of his jokes, and few are aware of the existence of this fine bust. 'I remember accompanying Fr. Burke to see it,' writes Dr. Maziere Brady. 'He said it was not a good likeness, as it was not ugly enough. I never knew a man with so little personal vanity.'

The prolonged fast of which Mrs. Jones is apprised was at last relaxed. Writing to his sister, he says: 'Your letter

Miss Kelly a Catholic. Dr. Doyle's letter to Abp. Murray, requesting his permission for the marriage, is now before us. Mrs. Wallace resided with Mrs. Jones in Rutland Square, Dublin, within a few doors of the Dominican Friars. Mrs. Jones died in June 1884.

[1] This, we believe, was the same artist who made a study of his head in plaster. Copies in relief were largely sold in Rome, and a small cast of it is now preserved at Tallaght. 'The likeness seemed so good,' observes a Dominican, 'that the artist was entrusted with the monument to Gregory XVI.'

enriched the luxury of a cup of chocolate and a fresh egg, on which I was regaling when it reached my hand. This, you will say, is nice mortification for a poor Dominican.'

Even in Rome (writes Mr. Sherlock) Fr. Burke was not destined to obtain release from his extraordinary labours as a preacher. Here Cardinal Wiseman had been wont to deliver in English the customary Lenten sermons at the Church of Santa Maria del Popolo. When his promotion to the head of the newly created English hierarchy made it necessary that he should quit Rome, his place in the pulpit was taken by Dr., now Cardinal, Manning. Called suddenly to England on the death of Dr. Wiseman in 1865, Dr. Manning in turn left the pulpit of Santa Maria vacant. A successor was looked for, and the Superior of San Clemente was selected. At short notice he took up the course of Lenten sermons, and even there, in the very centre of the Catholic world, his zeal, piety, and eloquence purchased for him the title of Prince of Preachers.[1] Lent after Lent his sermons were gladly called into requisition.

For some months previous to the events just described Fr. Burke preached. Persons who were in Rome at the close of 1864, and in January 1865, describe Fr. Burke as then a familiar figure in the pulpit.

These services used to be attended by large and critical audiences, consisting largely of Protestant tourists whom the feasts of the Holy Season attracted to the Eternal City (writes Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P.)

'How can they preach unless they be sent?' Fr. Burke more than once muttered. But the answer was assuring. He felt his mission strengthen while he traced in an unbroken chain the power the Church possessed from the day when the hands of Christ pressed upon the head of Peter. Not one link in that chain was wanting, he said. The Catholic

[1] The *Illustrated London News* of July 14, 1883, says of Fr. Burke, 'This eminent divine, by far the most impressive and popular orator in the Roman Catholic Church, was designated by Pius IX. as the "Prince of Preachers." It was not only in his native tongue, but also in Italian, that he preached with wondrous eloquence.' As regards the title said to have been bestowed by the Pope, we record the statement, but cannot find authority for it. We have heard the epithet, however, applied to Burke by Cardinal Cullen.

preacher was sent by Pius, who was of Gregory, who was of Pius, who was of Leo—and so on until he came to Clement, who was of Cletus, who was of Linus, who was of Peter, who was of Christ, who was of God.

These thoughts had been fostered by a great stimulus. Years after, when preaching in Dublin on the death of Pio Nono, Fr. Burke said :

It was my privilege to know something personally of him, for years to live under the light almost of his presence, to behold him in the moment of supreme glory, to behold him kneeling before the altar of God in the presence of Jesus Christ—when he instantly, and apparently without an effort, fell into that wonderful abstraction of prayer, so that the very sight of him was a most vivid memento.

These were the days of temporal as well as of spiritual power.

That triple crown which rests upon the Pope's brow (Fr. Burke explained) is made up of three distinct circles of gold. The first is symbolical of the universal episcopate of the Pope, for 'there shall be but one fold and one Shepherd ;' the second represents the supremacy of jurisdiction by which the Pope governs not only all the faithful in the world at large, feeding them as their supreme pastor, but by which also he holds the supremacy of jurisdiction over the anointed ministers and the episcopacy itself in the Church of God ; the third circle of this crown represents the temporal influence which the Pope has exercised and enjoyed for over one thousand years.

When refuting, at New York, a statement that the Pope had heavily taxed the Roman people, he said :

The house I lived in, if calculated from the amount of land that we paid taxes for with what is levied in Ireland, would be exactly 16*l.* a year. What do you think we paid?—and we were more heavily taxed than the lay people, because Pius IX. put the heavy taxes on the priests, and spared the people—15 dollars a year.

When I was in Rome there were hundreds of schools, one in almost every street. At eight o'clock A.M. the priests of St. Joseph's would go out ringing a bell and calling at every house, making the parents send their children to school, and if they had not breakfasted, they would give them a breakfast. And in the evening they did not allow them to go about the streets, where they could not fail to learn vice, but each one was returned home. You would see the children

marched out like soldiers, and with each ten or twelve of them a priest to bring them back to their parents.

Fr. Burke speaks of 'the house in which he lived.' He took up his residence in San Clemente during a very interesting period. Tradition has always maintained that the modern church of San Clemente—the most perfect model of an early Christian basilica—is built upon the actual site of the saint's dwelling. The original basilica was discovered in 1857 by excavations prosecuted under the direction of good Fr. Joseph Mullooly. The capital of a buried pillar having in the first instance peeped forth, he was led to dig deeper, with results full of charm. Nave, aisles, rows of deftly chiselled columns, came to light. While the earth was being removed, the long buried walls gradually disclosed strange figures in fresco—all busily engaged in the movement of various stories familiar to historic students. As a link of ancient Christian art with the early Italian school which miraculously escaped the devastations of Diocletian, those frescoes—with their outstretched hands—were warmly welcomed. This attitude—one of ardent devotion—characterises every votive painting in the crypt. Later on will be found some funny stories connected with Fr. Burke and them.

San Clemente is indebted to Fr. Mullooly in other ways. During the Garibaldian revolution the insurgents entered the wine vaults of the community outside Rome, drove in the heads of the casks, and drank the contents. Thereupon Fr. Mullooly hoisted the British flag over San Clemente, and thus preserved its treasures.

Fr Burke was very popular with the English-speaking people, and whenever he preached the church was packed. Here is a sample of the style which he found they liked best. It is the opening of a long sermon preached on the second Sunday of Advent, 1865, in Santa Maria del Popolo. This church is built on the site of Nero's Tomb; and Luther, when in Rome, lodged in the adjoining monastery:

The Catholic Church is a puzzle to the world. Men reproach her for her ambition in desiring the first place, and brooking no rival. Not content with labouring for her own children, she is constantly trying to convert others to her faith and disturbing the world in her search after proselytes; thrusting her theology and her disputes under people's noses, distracting men from their business, disturbing the peace and quiet of families, compromising Christian nations with the heathen by the efforts of her missionaries. She won't leave the Chinaman to smoke his opium in peace, or the Japanese to hug himself in his isolation, but she must provoke them to acts of cruelty and persecution. She must be building churches, founding missions and establishing Orders, spreading convents, fighting, disputing, criticising, and even anathematising. The world tries to silence and quiet her, now by contempt, now by threats, now by getting angry and making nasty laws, and yet she will persist in making herself heard and felt. Every now and then some English or American paper cries, Where are we? These Catholics are going to devour us. Look at England! Ten years ago there were only so many bishops, so many churches, so many monasteries, and now they are trebled. Look at America. Why, we are all going to be made Romans whether we will it or not. Contrast the Catholic Church's perpetual turmoil with the placid quiet of the Oriental Churches. Compare her fierce ambition with the modest bearing of the Church of England. . . . Look at these Jesuits!—you find them everywhere; we are constantly offended by the sight of Catholic priests, books, crucifixes, nuns. Everyone received into the Church seems to be suddenly changed, filled with an unquiet spirit, and a thirst to bring in others. When a Protestant he was a quiet, gentlemanly fellow, not bothering his own head or his friends; but he got bitten by those Ritualists, and he's gone over to Rome, and gone stark mad as well. He's constantly talking about religion; he goes to Mass at strange hours in the morning; he can't get on without his priest; men say that he has lost interest in many things, and hint that he is thinking of joining one of the Orders, and going to get murdered in the Chinese missions, or to kill himself slaving in the slums and hospitals of some great city.

On the other hand, we children of the Church also are struck with the amazing energy of our Mother. We know her to be the oldest institution in the world, yet we see in her no sign of old age. Old age brings with it a cessation of growth, a wasting away, a decline of strength, an apathy and neglect of the purposes of life, a second childhood.

But the Church is acknowledged, even by her enemies, to be as fresh and vigorous as she was two thousand years ago. She still grows, and the aged mustard-tree puts forth leaf and branch, flower and fruit, in every land. She questions every comer, examines every doctrine, prescribes for every moral disease, denounces and punishes every crime, with as keen an interest and as vital an energy, as in the days when the Apostolic Council sat in Jerusalem, when John the Evangelist denounced Cerinthus, when Paul excommunicated the incestuous Corinthian, when Peter preached in Corinth and in Rome. The secret of all this is faith, and it is to this that I invite your attention to-day. Friends admire and enemies decry the activity of the Church and of her children, but friends and enemies alike admit it. We are accused of many things, but no one dreams of accusing the Church of apathy, of indifference. Nay, our very activity is the foundation for those charges of ambition, of intrigue, of restless zeal, of troublesome intermeddling, which are made against us; and yet, if we reflect upon the nature of Divine faith, we shall find that this very activity is one of its essential attributes, one of the signs whereby it may be known to exist among men. For faith is the image of God, the reflection in the human intelligence of that truth which is God Himself. And consequently, faith must be not only one, because God is essentially one, but it must also be active, because God is pure, essential, and eternal action. 'Deus est actus purus,' says St. Thomas, the prince of theologians. This is a high and mysterious saying. Let us consider it.

He then went on to show how, when time began, God set on all things the stamp of that wonderful life and action which was His own essence. The features of Christ's work were followed, and the energy of unfailing life in the Catholic Church recognised. He also preached in the church of Santa Maria de Monte Santo; and his sermons at St. Andrea della Valle, the Theatine Church, are well remembered.[1]

'He had the *entrée* to all the artistic *salons*,' records an American memoir of Fr. Burke, 'and during his visits to the

[1] 'Here during the octave of the Epiphany every year there is celebrated solemn High Mass in one or other of the rites sanctioned by the Church. The Dominican rite has the day after the feast, the Ambrosian the following day, then the Easter rites fall in in turn. A sermon is also preached in a different language every day.'—*Very Rev. P. V. Kenny, O.P., to the Author.*

studios picked up very many valuable paintings and rare line engravings.' This belief is general, but Count Sherlock, who was Fr. Burke's companion on these expeditions, confesses: 'I cannot boast that either of us was very successful in our *trouvailles*, or that we ever got hold of any real treasure.' Some pictures which had seemed the work of the old masters, Fr. Burke brought to Ireland, but the candour of Dublin art critics quite disenchanted him. A few really good ones, however, remain at Tallaght as memorials of Fr. Burke's taste for art. His own word paintings, such as the 'Groupings of Calvary,' often derived breadth from contemplation of the grand works in which Rome abounds.

When I lift up my eyes here (he said), it seems as if I stood bodily in the society of these men. I see in the face of John the expression of the highest manly sympathy that comforted and consoled the dying eyes of the Saviour. It seems to me that I behold the Blessed Virgin, whose maternal heart consented in that hour of agony to be broken for the sins of men. I see the Magdalen, as she clings to the cross, and receives upon that hair with which she wiped His feet the drops of His blood. I behold that heart, humbled in penance and inflamed with love—the heart of the woman who had loved much, and for whom He had prayed. It seems to me that I travel step by step to Calvary, and learn, as they unite in Him, every lesson of suffering, of peace, of hope, of joy, and of love.

The only thing he really valued was a 'beautiful soul' (writes Miss Wyse, who knew him well in Rome); no matter where he found it, in a duchess or a beggar, it won his friendship and appreciation. I have seen many instances of it. As usual, he was most attracted by the poor. He considered the highest piety was found amongst them. I remember his standing before a large crucifix in San Clemente, and telling me, with tears in his eyes, of the beautiful sight he often witnessed when he came out to say Mass—in an old woman, or oftener many a young one—groups of them—kneeling in prayer before it and kissing it; and the earlier, the greater the number. And then how wonderfully he would speak of the beauty of the souls of little children—'the real temples of God and the abodes of the Holy Spirit.' 'I am always happy,' he said, 'when I am with a little child.'

I frequently met Fr. Burke in Rome in 1865 (observes the late

Archbishop of Tuam), and was at a loss to know which to admire most, his wonderful eloquence and delivery in the pulpit, or his brilliant social qualities, which I had frequent opportunities of appreciating at the Minerva and elsewhere.

Canon Brownlow, formerly of Cambridge, has supplied us with some graphic jottings. Those illustrative of the present period now come:

My recollections of Father Burke date from October 1864, when he gave a retreat of ten days to the students of the English College. I had never heard of him before, and my first impressions of him were formed from his spiritual side. I have got the notes of that retreat now. It was admirable in its arrangement, solid in its matter, clear and precise in its theology—every point resting on a definition of St. Thomas—full of happy and telling quotations from Holy Scripture in the Vulgate—and every now and then a burst of tender piety or an appeal to every noble and generous sentiment in the young clerics whom he was addressing. Sometimes, if he saw us looking depressed or drowsy in the afternoons, he would cheer us up and rivet our attention by some racy anecdote or graphic sketch of incidents that might happen to us in our future priestly life. Some thought his ideal of the life of a priest too highly pitched, but it was what he had set before himself, and he could hold up no lower model to those whom he directed either in his retreat addresses or in the more personal words which fell from him in the confessional. Those only who knew him in public or social life can form an idea of what a real spiritual man he was underneath all that brilliant surface of wit and humour which dazzled and often misled those who met him only in society. The malady which finally carried him off had already attacked him, and he was advised to smoke as an alleviation of the pain that often prostrated him. He was afraid of the students being scandalised at seeing the ascetic preacher of the retreat indulging in a cigar, so he used to come up to my room, as he thought my more mature years would understand the necessity for this relaxation, and this was the beginning of our friendship. My attraction for him needs no explanation; but I suppose my being a convert, and being able to tell him many things about English Protestant life and modes of thought, interested him, and I always found a warm welcome at San Clemente. I once had the happiness of spending ten days with him and his novices in their convent of San Michaele at Tivoli, and the charming little excursions, and merry flow of humour at the

recreations with which he tempered the severity of the monastic discipline for these young Irish religious, will ever remain among the happiest recollections of my life. I remember one Sunday we walked over to the Irish College there, and the intense delight that his arrival caused among the students, who were kept under a rather rigid discipline even during the *villeggiatura*. He pitied them for not having the freedom that we English students enjoyed, and as often as he could he visited them, and had them all crowding round him to listen to his ever-ready fund of amusing anecdote. The peals of merry laughter would attract the attention of the grave rector, who would come to see what was the matter, and would speedily be seen laughing as heartily as the rest. There were not many books at San Michaele, but I remember distinctly the works of Dr. Newman, and some of Mr. Kenelm Digby's. For Dr. Newman, Fr. Burke had the greatest reverence. He had never seen him, but he would get very indignant when any attack was made upon him by some over-zealous Catholic, who misunderstood certain expressions of the great Oratorian.[1]

Fr. Mullooly (adds Canon Brownlow) was as great a contrast to Fr. Burke as can be conceived, kind-hearted, worthy man as he was. Being most matter-of-fact, he was very slow in seeing the point of a joke, and many were made at his expense by his lively Prior. Yet Fr. Burke had a profound respect for him. On Burke's appointment as Prior, when the Irish novices were put under his charge, Fr. Mullooly retired into the position of syndicate, and thus continued to manage the temporalities of the convent with that prudence and thorough knowledge of Rome and the people which his long residence there had made habitual to him. On Fr. Burke's installation he assembled the community and addressed them in chapter, paying a well-merited tribute to the wisdom of Fr. Mullooly, and, turning to him, said that he trusted he should always have the benefit of his counsel and experience, and declared that he should never, during his term of office, do anything without his advice. After the chapter was over, Fr. Mullooly remarked to another Father, 'Seems a sensible young man, that!'

It was about this time that beneath San Clemente the interior of the Temple of Mithras was discovered. The antiquity must be great, for De Rossi says that, after the

[1] Letter of the Very Rev. Canon Brownlow, M.A., St. Mary's, Torquay, July 4, 1884.

death of Julian the Apostate, the use of subterranean cemeteries ceased. But some clue to the site of the temple is said to have been afforded by certain lines of Prudentius, and Fr. Mullooly dug with a will. Mullooly was not handsome, but graced with learning and holiness.

Among the objects of interest dug up in the subterranean church was a marble bust of a young man. This (writes Canon Brownlow) was affirmed by the learned to be Adonis, and Fr. Burke succeeded in persuading the good bursar that it bore a striking resemblance to his own rather homely features; and his great amusement was to get the simple-minded man to explain the antiquities to an admiring throng of visitors, and to prompt them to ask questions about this bust. Poor Fr. Mullooly fell into the trap, and would tell his audience that it was a bust of Adonis, adding, 'I am told that it bears a striking resemblance to me.' A celebrated French archæologist announced his intention of visiting San Clemente to see the antiquities. Fr. Burke managed to get hold of him before he saw Fr. Mullooly, and persuaded him to enter into the joke. After going through the other objects of interest with Fr. Mullooly, they came to this bust, and the *savant* gravely pronounced it to be Adonis, and then looking repeatedly from the bust to Fr. Mullooly, he cried out, 'Mais, c'est vous!' After this Fr. Mullooly was more than ever confirmed in his persuasion, and used to quote Monsieur X.'s opinion as decisive.

Fr. Mullooly's spirit of archæologic enterprise had been fanned by the example of another Dominican Prior—the Père Besson—who, in 1856, had unearthed beneath Santa Sabina fragments of the wall of Servius Tullius, formed of peperino, and a very ancient Roman house paved with fine mosaic. On Besson's death most of his discoveries were earthed up again; but it was a pleasant sign of the times that both England and Prussia gave Mullooly a helping hand.

Canon Brownlow has referred to Fr. Burke's indulgence in cigars. For this Fr. Mullooly felt himself privileged to remonstrate with him gravely. The Prior made his venerable friend stare by pretending that the Pope had sent him a

share of a chest of Havannas worth a dollar each, which a Mexican son had forwarded to the Vatican as an offering.

One day the Protestant monk, Fr. Ignatius, arrived in Rome, and at once went in quest of Mr. Brownlow. The latter brought him to San Clemente, but, Fr. Burke being away, he never saw Fr. Ignatius.

The Italian lay brother at San Clemente told Fr. Burke that I had been there, with two English monks, in a strange habit which he could not quite make out. Fr. Burke explained that they were not real monks at all, but were Protestants. 'Come! portano l' abito religioso e non sono Cristiani!'[1] exclaimed the lay brother, utterly puzzled by so strange a phase of Protestantism.[2]

Fr. Mullooly had sometimes very distinguished guests. Fr. Burke described him conducting the Empress of Russia through San Clemente and the larger catacombs. She at last came to an old fresco of St. Clement depicted in the act of giving his blessing with only two fingers raised. With an expression of delight the Empress reminded Mullooly that this was the formula of benediction in the Greek Church.[3]

The descent by the sickly light of a taper into this dark crypt—dear to martyred men—presented a contrast so great to the bright and busy world above that, if it were not for Fr. Burke's lively sallies, visitors would often have found themselves in solemn mood. Here, in listening to his deep voice, a strange feeling would be produced on the minds of historic thinkers when they remembered that within the same walls, and beneath the same roof, had already resounded the sonorous tones of St. Augustine and Gregory the Great.

[1] 'What! They wear the dress of a monk and are not Christians!'

[2] Letter of the Very Rev. Canon Brownlow, M.A., Torquay, July 23, 1884.

[3] Later on she had the satisfaction of finding on the end wall of the nave of San Clemente SS. Cyril and Methodius in episcopal robes of the Greek rite. But in the subterranean basilica a more remarkable fresco presented itself—a votive picture of our Saviour blessing according to the Greek form. Even Fr. Mullooly was puzzled. 'Why this composition should be found here . . . who can say?'—Vide *St. Clement and his Basilica*, by Joseph Mullooly, Rome 1873, p. 302.

Fr. Burke mentioned that he had been asked to conduct the Prince of Wales through the great catacombs, or, as they are sometimes styled, 'the crypt of St. Sebastian.' The Prince was mainly desirous to see the paintings with which the early Christians decorated their cemeteries. These include remarkable representations of our Saviour, of the Madonna, and the saints, and of the miracles of the Old and New Testament. Some English Catholic ladies, mostly converts, were in Rome at this time. They seemed divided in their devotion between the Prince and the pictures, and that evening conjured Fr. Burke to tell them exactly what His Royal Highness said of the frescoes. But he tantalised them by merely saying, 'He said——,' and then pausing. This went on for some minutes, Burke taking pleasure in exciting their curiosity. 'For mercy sake, what *did* he say?' exclaimed Lady A—— in a perfect flutter. 'Yes, yes, I'm coming to it,' replied Fr. Burke, and ended their suspense by, 'He said—"Aw!"'

In point of fact, His Royal Highness said much more; but Fr. Burke was not the man to boast. The Earl of Granard, in a letter dated February 21, 1885, speaks of 'Fr. Burke's intimacy with the Prince of Wales, who made his acquaintance at Rome and had a great liking for him.'

Fr. Tom had been constantly asked to act as guide to the Catacombs, and would afterwards give the comments of the visitors who hung on his words. A military officer clenched each new exposition with 'By Jove,' a phrase he never varied; a Ritualistic parson said 'Exactly so' to everything, and so on. It was a favourite piece of humour, when acting as *cicerone*, for Fr. Tom to mimic the tones of the professional guide, a doctor of some attainments.

On the Feast of the Purification I accompanied Fr. Burke to St. Peter's for the ceremony of the Blessing of the Candles (writes the Very Rev. G. D. Power, formerly of San Clemente). After the function in the Basilica the parish priests, rectors, and heads of

the religious houses, proceeded to the Audience Chamber in the Vatican Palace to present a handsome wax candle to His Holiness Pope Pius IX.

The Pope humorously remarked to the Prior of San Clemente, that such a large candle would be of some service in the subterranean Basilica of San Clemente which was then being excavated, and which the Pope had found badly lighted on the occasion of one of his visits. Fr. Burke asked His Holiness in his sly, humorous way, 'if he might convey that message to the venerable Fr. Mullooly, whom the Pope as well as the bystanders knew to be most touchy on the subject of the perfection of the works going on in the excavations.' 'Oh, no,' replied the Pope, laughingly, and with the slightest imaginable shrug. On our return through the suite of antechambers which led out of the audience room, one of the Noble Guard muttered some expression of supercilious contempt as Fr. Burke and his companion passed by.

The Prior of San Clemente overheard the remark, and suddenly wheeled round and faced the Guard, and in the most vigorous strain and impassioned Italian, gave him 'a piece of his mind.' The Noble Guard, stung to the quick, and ashamed of himself, slunk away utterly confounded by the scathing rebuke administered by the Irish Friar. 'Si, signor,' he said, in a tone of indignant rebuke; 'si, signor, sono un povero frate. Son anche Irlandese; ma adesso sono nella casa di mio Padre.'[1] He gave it to him. The only thing he could never stand was a sneer. A big lusty Italian ventured on another occasion in the street to use some insulting remark as Fr. Tom passed. He was obliged to make an ample apology on the spot, and then sneaked away.

I was present at his Lenten conferences preached in the church of Santa Maria dei Monti, in Rome.

He would take me out for a walk outside the walls some days previous to his preaching, and go over the points of his coming exposition. In the condensation and conciseness of his synopsis he would display a strong analytical mind, put his discourse into a simple syllogism, and develop it into one of his grandly eloquent conferences. His discourse on 'Divorce and Modern Society' was one of the finest of that brilliant series. These conferences were attended, among other personages, by the Duke of Norfolk, Cardinal (then Mgr.) Howard, Anglican clergymen, and nearly the entire

[1] 'Yes, sir . . . yes, sir, I am a poor monk; I am also an Irishman, but now I am in my Father's house.'

community of Anglicans in Rome, the students and rectors of the English colleges and religious communities in Rome.

They used to take their stations on the street outside the church long before the doors were opened.

When that law of divorce was established in England (says Fr. Burke himself) I happened to be in Rome, and a Protestant lady, engaged to a Protestant English gentleman, was there too. She heard a sermon of mine on these questions of marriage and divorce, and she said, 'I am bound to become a Catholic out of self-respect and in self-defence;' and she wrote that very day to release herself from her engagement, saying, 'My dear friend, if you will become a Catholic, and will share with me the belief of the inviolable tie of marriage, I will marry you; but if you remain in a religion which makes divorce *possible*, I cannot marry you.'[1]

Before delivering these sermons he maintained his old habit of soliciting the suggestions of his novices, who were indeed but beardless boys; and one of them, who is now Coadjutor Bishop of Cork, has recognised in the discourses as subsequently preached the thoughts which, for some subtle discipline, he courted.

One day the Master of Novices opened a volume and began to expound its teaching to the youths who surrounded him. The author was Cuniliati, a Dominican, who wrote on Moral Theology. One of the novices ventured to remark that Cuniliati was a theologian of extreme austerity. 'Always take a high theory,' replied Fr. Burke, 'because your practice is sure to fall under the mark.'

He would occasionally take up some great moral writer, read a chapter, and then supplement it with new and wonderful points of his own. Faber (he said) was the only devotional author whose expositions he could not further develop.[2]

On another day he said, 'I never despair of a man if he observes his daily meditation and examination of conscience. He impressed upon his novices always to try and foresee what they would be exposed to during the day.'

[1] 'Catholicity the Safety of America.' Lecture at Perth Amboy, N.J., U.S., Nov. 7, 1872. [2] Very Rev. P. V. Kenny, O.P., to the Author.

In Rome he bought the complete edition of Dickens, published by the Baron Tauchnitz, and refreshed his memory of the characters. These he reproduced by personal performance for the amusement of the novices and Fathers.

For Thackeray's novels he had not the same fondness. He thought them too satiric, and often jaundiced in their view. But he greatly liked the earlier efforts of M. Angelo Titmarsh, especially 'Mrs. Perkins's Ball.' Often he enacted the whole scene for his novices, and stalked among them as 'The Mulligan of Bally Mulligan.'

Dr. Magee, Professor of Theology at Carlow College, used to tell us an incident of his first visit to Rome, that, requiring some trivial information in one of his classic rambles, he addressed himself to a monk who paced the Piazza del Popolo. The monk seemed impenetrably stupid. He did not know Italian; when asked if he could speak French he replied 'Very little;' of Latin he seemed shamefully ignorant; Greek he declined with a shrug. At last the monk contrived to convey that he hailed from Dublin, whereupon some observations in English were eagerly addressed to him by Dr. Magee. A fluent response in vernacular Irish served only to puzzle the Professor the more, and made him feel ashamed that he should be ignorant of the language of his native land. Dumbfounded and crestfallen, he turned away, and it was not until long after that he discovered that the mysterious monk, all shrug and solemnity, was the great Fr. Burke. But Magee's name, face, and failings were perfectly well known to Fr. Tom. Magee was an irrepressible talker; 'brilliant flashes of silence' rarely marked his monologue. He liked to boast of all the tongues he had mastered; how he could draw forth sparks of electricity from inert masses; read a man's soul, and diagnose 'sham' with one glance of his piercing eye. Noodles thought it a coincidence that M should be the initial letter of Mezzofanti and Magee. This was the man whom Burke—on the impulse of the moment—decided

to confound and silence. Fr. Tom had been familiar with Magee's name through an ingenious Latin epitaph composed by the Rev. Dr. Taylor, and which is now printed for the first time :

Hic jacet
Et tandem tacet
Joannes Magee
S. T. P.
Vitam egit in loquendo
Semper nova proponendo
Nihil autem faciendo.

This epitaph was penned twenty years before Magee's death, and its author pre-deceased its subject, who, however, seems to have been unconscious of its existence. We are bound to say that, socially, few men were more beloved than Dr. Magee.

There was no language in Europe that Burke could not speak fluently (observes Mgr. Sheehan). But there was one language in the knowledge of which he took more pride than that of any other tongue—the grand old Celtic of his native home. His Irish was rich and full, and spoken with what Irish-speaking people call *bloss*, meaning taste and finish.[1]

I saw a good deal of Fr. Burke in his different visits to Rome (writes John Count Sherlock) ; he could make fun and wit out of anything. There is a view which I heard more than once hazarded, and which I looked on at the time as worthy of note, that much of his jocularity was put on in order to disqualify him from being raised to the post of Bishop, which he very much dreaded. No one would have been more likely to urge his promotion than my late valued friend Cardinal Cullen, and nowhere more than in his presence did Fr. Burke expand. I scarcely remember an occasion of dining with his Eminence with few or more guests, either in Dublin or in Rome, that Fr. Burke

[1] In one of his lectures Fr. Burke said that his knowledge of the Irish tongue enabled him to converse freely with natives of the Scottish Highlands. Spoken before the deluge, Gaelic is venerable for its antiquity. O'Halloran went so far as to assert that it was the language of Japhet and also of Paradise. Fr. Burke was not much of a philologist, and expressed no opinion as to its origin. But he held with Dr. Haughton that Irish was the only tongue which the Devil never could learn, and that it was a puzzle how, thus ignorant, he succeeded in tempting Eve.

was not a standing dish, and no one more enjoyed the scene of the mountebank Italian dentist, or the concert of the itinerant musicians composed of halt and blind, than his Eminence. There was one subject, however, that never found him otherwise than serious. He had from an early period become known to and greatly cherished by the late Mrs. Ball, of Loretto Abbey, Rathfarnham, a very gifted and remarkable woman, who saw the rare qualities of the young religious and the career that was in store for him. He was always ready to acknowledge that he owed very much to her advice, and that he could never show too much gratitude to her memory. His buoyancy of spirits would give way to periodical depression consequent on his state of health.

No wonder that our great Dominican should have been in dread of a mitre: for his predecessor, Fr. Mullooly, had been nominated 'Dignissimus' for Ardagh, but shrank from the post. From the seventeenth century to the present hour the Priors of San Clemente—including Dr. O'Fynan, whose mitre proved a crown of thorns—have frequently been chosen for episcopal duty.

Nowhere was Fr. Burke more himself than when the subterranean church of San Clemente was thrown open to the public (continues Count Sherlock). He would cicerone numbers of English, and when showing and explaining the frescoes strongly defend their great antiquity, whilst at the same moment, within a short distance in the church, a rival ecclesiastic, leading a crowd of American hearers, would throw out objections, and endeavour to shear them of some centuries of antiquity. On these occasions good Fr. Burke on his return would say, 'Did I not back Mullooly well?'[1]

Fr. Burke's strong religious feeling in the same capacity is shown by Canon Brownlow, who was making his studies in Rome at this time and saw a great deal of him.

One day an English lady came to San Clemente, and asked to see the subterranean church. After Fr. Burke had explained the paintings, &c., the lady said in a patronising and somewhat supercilious tone, 'I think you are Irish, are you not?' Fr. Burke immediately went into a kind of rapture of gratitude. 'Ah, yes! It was no merit

[1] Letter of John Count Sherlock to the Author, Oct. 2, 1884.

of mine, but the great goodness of God, who caused me to be born in that glorious land of the faith. How can I ever be grateful enough! Why, I might have had the misfortune to have been born in England and have been an utter stranger to the truth! I suppose, ma'am, you are a Protestant?' The lady assented. 'Ah!' continued the Father, 'and so might I have been, if it had not pleased the merciful God that I should have the unspeakable blessing of being born in Ireland.' The lady went away much abashed at having evoked this unexpected reply to her condescending remark.[1]

No reader, we hope, will infer that Fr. Burke was a bigot. Speaking at St. Paul's, Brooklyn, of 'Essays and Reviews,' he said they were 'written entirely by Anglican clergymen, learned men and honest men. God forbid that I should hurt their feelings, for some of the dearest friends I have in the world are Protestants and Englishmen.' And, in his lecture on 'The Christian Man' (March 22, 1872), he says:

Call me no bigot if I say that the Catholic Church alone is the great representative of Christianity. I do not deny that there is goodness outside of it, nor that there are good and honest men who are not of this Church. Whenever I meet an honest, truthful man, I never stop to inquire if he is Catholic or Protestant; I am always ready to do him honour, as the noblest work of God.

One day a person who can hardly be called a lady waited upon the Prior of San Clemente and sought to draw him into controversy. She used offensive language in regard to the Blessed Virgin, and expressed utter incredulity that clerical celibacy could exist. Fr. Burke stood up, rang the bell, and to the lay brother said, 'Show this lady to the door, and be cautious henceforth what class of person you admit.'

[1] Letter of Canon Brownlow, M.A., Torquay, June 25, 1884.

[2] It so happened that at one time a large and well-ordered institute faced the house in which Fr. Burke lived. The good Dominican, as he paced his room, was more than once tormented by the vision of a female at early morn, who, probably from want of thought, would stand at the window, in the cuirass of a well-steeled stays, and with outstretched arms bind the tresses of her hair. When next the apparition came he shouted loudly an epithet which began with a 'B,' and was confined to a monosyllable. Henceforth his meditations were not disturbed, nor his eyes offended. In this act he proved himself a true son of

In a subsequent lecture on 'the Wants of Society,' he said :

The Catholic Church creates purity amongst the people because she creates a perfect type of purity in her priesthood and in her sanctuary. The Catholic Church says to the people ; Oh, you men ! oh, you husbands ! be faithful, be pure, be self-restrained men ! Look at your fellow-men in the sanctuary ! Look at the men who minister unto me at my altars ! Behold, I have taken them in the bloom of their youth, in the strength of their manhood ; and I have enabled them so to annihilate their passions and their bodies that no thought or shadow of a thought to sin allied is ever allowed to linger in its passage across their imagination ; that no act unworthy an angel of God is ever committed by them ; that they are in the flesh, indeed, but exalting the spirit over that flesh ; and, therefore, it is that I admit them to my most holy altar, because they are complete victories, and the embodiments of victory, over their passions. In the purity of her priesthood, in the virginal purity of her priest, and monk, and nun, the Church of God proves to the world that this high virtue is possible ; that it is easy and feasible to man ; and that all that any man has to do is to look up to Jesus Christ in prayer, and in sacrifice, and in humility, in order to obtain that gift of innocence and purity which is the adornment of the Christian soul.

The object attributed to Fr. Burke in assuming so much exuberance—namely, that his tonsure might be kept free from the weight of a mitre—seems to have been tolerably successful.

The inexhaustible flow of fun that bubbled out so naturally from the witty Prior of San Clemente (writes Canon Brownlow) seemed to certain grave divines somewhat lowering to his dignity, and it got whispered among the Cardinals that their Eminences were at times the objects of his jokes, and that he even presumed to mimic those exalted personages. Some of them spoke seriously about it, and asked the Dominican Cardinal Guidi to admonish him to behave with greater gravity. Cardinal Guidi repaired to San Clemente, and proceeded to deliver his message, and Fr. Burke received it with becoming submission. But no sooner had the Cardinal finished

St. Thomas Aquinas, who, when his relatives sent a fair visitor to him in the hope of weaning him from holy thoughts, put her to flight with a flaming brand. The story of St. Kevin repulsing Kathleen from Glendalough rests on less sound foundation.

than Fr. Burke imitated his manner, accent, and language, with such ludicrous exactness, that the Cardinal burst into a fit of laughter, and declared that it was so amusing he could not tell him to stop.[1]

It is satisfactory to know, on the authority of Steevens, that Democritus, the laughing philosopher, lived one hundred and nine years; Heraclitus, the crying one, only sixty. Laughing, then, is best (he adds), and to laugh at one another is perfectly justifiable, since we are told that the gods themselves, though they made us as they pleased, cannot help laughing at us.

Fr. Burke no doubt lengthened by his pleasantry the useful lives of his mortified brethren; meanwhile his inner life was worthy of Lacordaire.

Mr. O'Hara, Q.C., in spending happy hours with Fr. Burke at the house of Count Sherlock in Rome, had been asked to bring his family to visit San Clemente. One day they left home with that object, and, hearing that Father Burke was somewhere about the church, entered in search of him. Nowhere did he appear. At last a solitary figure, motionless before the tabernacle, and seemingly lost in an ecstasy of contemplation, arrested Mr. O'Hara's eye. Long and patiently the party waited, hoping that the figure would at last rise; but the man, whose knees ought to have been stiff from kneeling, tired out his patient visitors. They at last withdrew, not less amazed than edified, that piety so strong should animate one

[1] 'The Dominican Cardinal Guidi used often to visit San Clemente in my time,' writes a friar preacher, 'and sometimes dine with the community or at our country house without the city walls. Previously Cardinal Guidi had been himself prior and professor of theology in San Clemente. He went from thence to the University of Vienna, and it was whilst teaching St. Thomas's theology there that he was made cardinal and archbishop of his native city, Bologna. He was afterwards made a *suburban* bishop—Cardinal Archbishop of Tusculum (Frascati).' A subsequent letter says: '"Our country house" is situated at our vineyard about two miles without the Porta Maggiore. The schools give a vacation of *one* day each month in Rome, and *we* used to spend that day at the vineyard in company of many friends, English and Italian. Among other frequent visitors not previously mentioned were the correspondent of the *Times* and Dr. Silas Chatard, rector of the North American College, and now Bishop of Vincennes, U.S.'

whom they had previously known only as an irrepressible humourist.[1]

What were the thoughts that filled his mind? The Holy Eucharist in the Tabernacle led to other reflections hardly less absorbing. In cold clay, beneath the altar of San Clemente, reposed St. Ignatius of Antioch, who had been martyred in the Coliseum; St. Cyril, St. Servulus, and the colleague of St. Paul—St. Clement himself. Some lines of Newman, written long before he became a Catholic, remind us that

> The Fathers are in dust, yet live to God:
> So says the Truth; as if the motionless clay
> Still held the seeds of life beneath the sod,
> Smouldering and struggling till the Judgment day.

People used to go to confession to Fr. Burke, thinking that he would prove an easy-going director. Never was expectation more utterly disappointed. They found themselves in a vice.[2]

His command and mastery of Italian were wonderful (says Fr. Power). Both the facility and felicity in the use of idiomatic Italian, his familiarity with popular phrases, and the delicacies of the soft Tuscan tongue, astonished and delighted the Italians.

I remember a dinner party composed exclusively of Italians, ecclesiastics, and gentlemen of the literary and learned professions in Rome in 1865. He kept the entire company in roars of laughter by his recital of Irish stories, told with an idiomatic accuracy, rounded off in his own inimitable way, invested in all the paradoxes of Hibernian humour, in the musical Italian language.

[1] Fr. Burke, from the day he made his solemn profession, had diligently studied, and as far as possible followed the inner life of Dominic. Ten years after, at St. Saviour's, Dublin, he described an incident that had due influence upon him: 'He (Dominic) took his station in front of the sanctuary, and then through the long silent hours of the night, alone with God, he poured forth his whole soul in prayer. Then God heard from the lips of this man such words as He hears in Heaven from the highest and the holiest of his angels—bursts of love and ardent aspirations to be permitted to suffer and to die for the love of God. And when the grey dawn broke through the cathedral windows, and the canons returned, they found him pale and exhausted, like one worn out by some great physical emotion.'

[2] Fr. Pius Cavanagh, O.P., to the Author.

I observed that he could write Italian as correctly and with as much facility as he spoke it (continues Fr. Power), and more naturally than if penning a letter in English. It was necessary that the Constitutions of a great religious institute, founded in Ireland by a distinguished lady, should come fully before the Propaganda; and I remember how kindly he exerted himself on behalf of the Institute. He translated their Constitutions *currente calamo* for the authorities, and got them approved.

His memory was most retentive. He often told me that he rarely forgot anything he ever read. He could recite the Psalter in Latin, and rarely used a Breviary when reciting the Offices *de communi* or the Office of the Dead.

Having an excellent ear for music, he would repeat with great accuracy a song with words once sung in his presence. His readiness in extemporaneous versification would recall the quickness of Hook by their apposite and descriptive touches.

In his leisure he would read from Thackeray or Dickens for the recreation of his hearers in his own inimitable vein of dry humour and elocutionary power. He could recite pages of a book after one reading.

During the tedious work of excavating under the modern church of San Clemente, to lay bare the ancient basilica which the indefatigable Fr. Mullooly had discovered, his tedious operations and untiring industry were partially rewarded by finding amidst the *débris* pieces of old Roman coins, pavement, and other relics, which perhaps Cyril the philosopher had already touched. We found Fr. Mullooly in unusually good humour one morning. He had found in the excavations a large fragment of what he styled a veritable Tuscan vase. He held it up with the gratified pride of a virtuoso, showed it with great delight, and dilated on the beauty and durability of the specimen. Fr. Burke, as Prior, summoned the community to see this interesting relic. He took the fragment delicately in his hands and turned it up and down, eyeing it in every direction. 'What a lovely specimen! This is the first and only piece of the genuine Tuscan article you have found, Fr Mullooly! You ought certainly to give it an honourable place in the collection of your antiquities.' 'Certainly, sir, certainly. There's nothing like it in all the museums of Rome.' And the precious fragment duly got its niche of honour.

Something of the mystery of Wilkie Collins's 'Moonstone' hung around this Tuscan pottery. One or two knew the mystery. It

was an *awful* secret—and the divulging meant a terrible fuss and bursts of indignation in some quarters. It *was* kept—for some time. Like all secrets, it must out.

An unknown hand had, I may say, sacrilegiously placed that fragment one dark afternoon deep down in the excavations after the workmen had retired. Where that 'Tuscan vase' was originally found, and to what uses it had been formerly applied, remain a portion of the secret till this day. De Rossi and other antiquarians rejected it as ancient Tuscan manufacture, and deemed it more modern, and English in its artistic workmanship and style of ware.

One day in August Fr. Burke brought the students out for the usual 'Camerata.' During the walk we struck a river. It was the classic Anio. 'Now for a swim!' cried out the students. It did not take long to obtain Fr. Tom's permission, as he was one of those most exhilarated by that prospect.

It was a sultry afternoon, and the Anio invited us to bathe in its cool waters. Fr. Burke reminded us that Virgil had found it refreshing eighteen hundred years before.

> 'Quique altum Præneste viri quique arva Gabinæ
> Junonis, *gelidumque Anienem* et roscida rivis
> Hernica saxa colunt.'—Virg. *Æn.* vii.

In he went with a rush, and splashed and swam and dived in the Anio, so loved of Horace and Virgil.

About a week after the Prior surprised us with the 'row' we had all got into with a community of monks whose monastery overlooked the river where we had bathed.

A most formal complaint had been lodged at head-quarters against the Prior of San Michaele, Tivoli, for the awful outrage of swimming in the middle of the broad day in the Anio.

I must say that if there was a lonely, sequestered place, the spot we had chosen was very emphatically such. There was no house in view. The monastery lay away up in the grove, and we were rejoicing that no observation could possibly mar the unspeakable luxury to Irish boys of a swim on an August afternoon in Italy.

The Prior was brought over the coals by the General of the Order—then Père Jandel—but who laughed a good deal when the Prior convinced him of the absolute necessity of teaching Irish boys how to dive and swim, who were to live in a country like Ireland, full of beautiful lakes and entirely surrounded by water; and the art

of swimming was, he submitted, the only means of escape left open to the Irish in case of being obliged to run out of the country.

Maybe we didn't think those Italians squeamish, and haters of water.

Fr. Burke was a familiar figure in the chambers of the Vatican, where the long-buried statues of ancient Greece once more see the light of day and challenge the admiration of mankind:—

One afternoon (continues Fr. Power) we were sauntering through one of the marble halls which branch off the Sculpture Gallery, stopping to examine and admire any piece of ancient or modern sculpture that struck us as particularly worthy of closer observation.

I remarked the strong attraction which the ancient statues of Fauns, Satyrs, and mythological monstrosities had for Fr. Burke. He was ecstatic over the skill of the cunning hand, the faithfulness to life, the realistic effects of the works of some one of the old Grecian or Roman artists. But his humour and marvellous mimicry were excited. He would pause, examine, attitudinise, pose, grin, smile, cry—producing a facsimile of the statue which rivetted him to the spot. He would laughingly ask, 'Am I like it?' 'Is that it?' 'I'll do it better next time—now look.' And then he would throw himself into the attitude, and invest himself in its peculiarities and classic expression. Minus the habit, he might have been cast in the flesh in the same mould which perhaps served Dædalus, Phidias, Pythagoras, or Praxiteles, Zenodorus or Antinous for their classic models. His imitations were transformations—the *alter ego* of the statue before him—perfect transfigurations.

We paused for a long while opposite the Laocoon, and refreshed our classics by recalling Virgil's description:

> Post, ipsum, auxilio subeuntem ac tela ferentem,
> Corripiunt, spirisque ligant ingentibus; et jam
> Bis medium amplexi, bis collo squamea circum
> Terga dati, superant capite et cervicibus altis.—*Æn.* ii.

The intense suffering, the writhing agony, the expression of one superuhman effort to uncoil the huge encircling serpent; the despair and weakening efforts of the Laocoon will never be forgotten by anyone who has visited the Vatican Museum and gazed upon one of the grandest pieces of sculpture in the world.

We looked around. There was no one in sight. 'I'll try him!'

and in a twinkling there was the Laocoon : the marvellous power of contortion, of personification, the agony, the strength of the terrible struggle, the despair, were displayed in realistic effort by the wonderful Fr. Tom. 'Is that like him?' The effort took his breath away. We had been watched ; a party of ladies and gentlemen came upon us, stood opposite the Laocoon, looked at it, and then turned their eyes full upon Fr. Burke. In his inimitable way, as if by way of no harm, he remarked to one of the party, 'I was only trying my hand at the Laocoon.'

'Oh, do try it again ; do, please.' An introduction and an acquaintance was made on the spot, and the English party, one of whom was a clergyman of the Church of England, became fast and admiring friends of Fr. Burke, and during their stay in Rome were frequent visitors at San Clemente, and attended his sermons during the following Lent in the church of Santa Maria del Angeli in the Corso.[1]

Fr. Power says that, minus the habit, Fr. Burke might have been cast in the same mould which produced our most famous classic statues. Even the habit he afterwards utilised by drawing its white hood over his head when, in recumbent posture, he personated the Sphynx. Revisiting Woodchester before his death, he made the long, narrow table of the reception room a well-proportioned pedestal for this *pose plastique.*

One day a very interesting incident occurred. The Prince of Wales called at San Clemente. 'The treasures of the Church,' writes Canon Hegarty, 'were under the protection of the British flag. They dared not keep them where they might tempt the cupidity of the rapacious Italians.' The Canon adds that 'His Royal Highness inquired after the safety of San Clemente, in reply to which he was informed that they were as yet undisturbed ; but who could tell how long that happy state of things might continue ?'

The Very Rev. M. A. Costello, O.P., addressing the present

[1] MS. Recollections of Fr. Burke, supplied to the Author by the Rev. G. D. Power, formerly of San Clemente, Oct. 17, 1884.

writer, states that what is now added is within his personal knowledge:

Before leaving Rome the Prince said that 'if anything sinister should occur, Fr. Mullooly must write to him at once.'

'When we here, at San Clemente, were in a state of much anxiety,' continues Fr. Costello, 'lest our house should be involved in the general suppression of ecclesiastical corporations by the Italian Government, the Prince interested himself much in our favour, recommending our case warmly and earnestly to the good offices of Sir A. Paget, the then British Ambassador to the Italian Court, who, as I know, worked well and successfully in our cause.'[1]

The result is that the Dominicans now hold San Clemente on a title independent of Pope or King.

San Clemente was an harmonious spot during the reign of the 'Prince of Preachers.' Vocal and instrumental music filled its venerable walls. For this he had good precedent. 'The love St. Columbkille had for Ireland,' he says, 'was a spirit common to all Irish saints. Whilst they were crowned with high church dignities in foreign lands, still, as recorded in the history of St. Aidan, first Archbishop of Northumbria, whenever they wished to enjoy themselves they assembled and celebrated in the Irish language, with sweetest verse, to the sound of harp and timbrel, the praises of their native isle.'

'Ah!' he sadly says on another occasion—

Italy has no such song. Great as the Italians are as masters, they have no popularly received tradition of music. I have lived amongst them for years, and the Italian peasant, while working in the vineyard, has no music except two or three high notes of a most melancholy character, commencing upon a high dominant and ending in a semitone. The peasants of Tuscany and of Campagna, when, after their day's work, they meet in the summer evenings for a dance, have no music; a girl takes a tambourine and beats upon it, marking time, and they dance to that, but they have no music. So with other countries. But go to Ireland; listen to the old woman as she rocks herself in her chair, and pulls down the hank of flax for the spinning;

[1] Very Rev. M. A. Costello, O.P., to the Author, San Clemente, Rome, April 5, 1885.

listen to the girl coming home from the field with the can of milk on her head, and what do you hear?—magnificent melody. Go to the country merry-makings and you will be sure to find the old fiddler or white-headed piper, an infinite source of brightest music.

'"Moore's Melodies" were his favourite songs,' writes Fr. Murphy—

Their plaintive airs harmonised with the deep sympathy of his nature, for, however genial he might appear to the external world, there was always a vein of melancholy running through his inner life. The deep pathos of the history, the sweet sentiment, which was the very inspiration of the melody, caused him to pour out all the wealth of feeling that slumbered in his soul.

Our Dominican considered that music lost its best inspiration when it fell from the guidance of the Church. He fancied —and the words are his own—that it was too often applied to the magnifying of human pride, to the celebration of human passion, to the illustration of all that is worst in man; and that the highest theme of modern composers was not the 'Stabat Mater'—the wail of the Virgin's sorrow—not the 'Alleluia,' to proclaim the glories of the risen God, but some story of sensual love, set forth in all the charms and meretricious embellishments of art. He also regretted to see that the halo of divine light surrounding Mary's face as it brightened beneath the creative hand of the young Dominican painter of Urbino died out in a subsequent school of art.

Look at the Magdalens—the Madonnas of Rubens (Fr. Burke said). Rubens was a Catholic, yet his pictures display the very genius of Lutheranism. If he wanted to paint the Blessed Virgin, he chose some gross-looking woman in whom he found a ray of mere sensual beauty, and he put her on the canvas, and held her up before men as that Virgin whose prayer was to save, and whose power was above the Angels. The artist who would truly represent her must have his pencils touched with the purity of heaven.

Simplicity of faith and great devotion to the Blessed Virgin struck me as remarkable features of Fr. Burke's religious life (continues Fr. Power's MS.). He surpassed himself in his sermons on the life, dignity, and virtues of the mother of God. During the summer

vacation of 1865 at San Michaele, Tivoli, he inaugurated a pilgrimage to the famous shrine of Our Lady of Vicovaro. This little mountain village was about eighteen miles from Tivoli. The pilgrims started about four o'clock in the morning, and along the route up the rugged hills and mountain roads, led by the fervent Prior, recited the Litanies, Psalms, and the Rosary, till the procession of the devout clients of Mary reached the little village church, and attended the solemn High Mass, sung by Fr. Burke.

One of the novices who accompanied Fr. Burke to Vicovaro was the late Prior of St. Saviour's, Limerick, and his notes supply an interesting sequel:

We students were informed by him that whilst singing the High Mass he was favoured by seeing the eyes of Our Lady in the picture move. We could see that something must have appeared to him during Mass, as his own appearance became so changed. He had ever after a great veneration for 'Our Lady of Vicovaro.'

It is mentioned in the inner life of Lacordaire, who had been a strong sceptic, that he believed in a similarly miraculous quality possessed by a picture also of the Madonna. But we are bound to add that such views are quite exceptional with Catholic priests. The emotions which visibly affected Fr. Burke's face during High Mass may not have been induced entirely by changes real or fancied in the wonderful picture at Vicovaro.[1] Fr. Burke, whenever he celebrated Mass—especially High Mass, which being of great length and solemnity affords abundant time for thought—realised the powers of his office to an extent not always found with officiating ministers. Once, when referring to the words of Chrysostom describing the virgin purity of the priesthood, Burke exclaimed:

[1] At the same time, it would be hard for any man who pinned his faith, as Fr. Burke did, to so high an authority as Thomas Aquinas, to exclude a belief in the supernatural. 'St. Thomas thinks,' writes the Rev. W. E. Addis, 'that God has communicated to the saints a permanent power of appearing on earth when they please.' In the 'Summa' (Supp. qu. 69, a. 3) will be found a theological disquisition showing that God, for wise reasons, may permit departed souls to appear on earth.

This life is a God-like life; this profession is an angelic profession. How can I find words to express the full sanctity of that state? Oh! great God! a man speaks a few words standing at an altar, holding a piece of bread in his hands, and all heaven is in commotion. Every angel prostrates himself in adoration, for the Almighty God rises on His throne, and places Himself, by a wonderful incarnation, in the hands of him whose voice calls forth a response from heaven. How can I speak of the dignity and holiness of that state which brings a man into such awful contact with the Almighty—to hold God in his hands, and speak to God as a man speaks to his friend? Such is the brightness of the glory of the priesthood; such was the sight shown to Moses on the mountain, which ever after enrayed his head with glory; and as Moses came from the mountain, having seen God, so the priest comes down from the altar with the awful sanctity of having seen Jesus Christ.[1]

Fathers who lived with our friar say that for several years after ordination he was much troubled by scrupulosity. The obligations of the sacred ministry were completely realised by him. He felt, and felt correctly, that he had received not only supernatural powers, but a grace beyond any merits of his own. The responsibilities of his position pressed heavily on him, and when he placed in the balance his own weakness, and the weight of the trust reposed in the priest, it struck him as forcibly as though a contrast had been instituted between man and God. The exhortation in Timothy to remember the grace he received rung in the ear of Thomas Burke. At Tallaght he usually went to confession two or three times a week; but if he said Mass daily he went still oftener; and with his sacred vestments on him he would suddenly drop on his knees in the sacristy, to any priest who happened to be there, and at once disburthen his mind of some scruple which otherwise might have tended to distract him during the Holy Sacrifice.

[1] Sermon at consecration of Bishop Hendricken, Providence, April 28, 1872.

CHAPTER IX.

DOINGS IN THE ETERNAL CITY.

MUCH that was purely professional in the life of the good Prior must remain unrecorded. It is not necessary to cite proofs of the highly spiritualised character of the man, or to show the rich harvest of conversions which he reaped in the confessional. All this time, the course of his inner life continued to flow; but the cell wherein he prays is almost too sacred for intrusion; and our task concerns itself more with the man in lighter hours.

During his priorship of San Clemente, Fr. Burke invited on a visit a youth then in delicate health, whose family had been kind to him in Ireland. For three months he was the daily companion of Fr. Tom. Part of the time he acted as amanuensis in taking down notes for a course of Lenten sermons. But it was his 'mems' for a great discourse on Church music, which, for their comic eccentricity, left most impression on his guest. These notes seemed to the uninitiated wildly irrelevant, but Fr. Burke explained that they served their purpose by prompting a particular course of thought. 'I can compare it to nothing but a chapter of Mark Twain,' the amanuensis said; 'never shall I forget after an extract from Polydorus being called upon to write down:

> With that an arch wag
> Stuck a pin in his bag,
> When the music flew up to the moon too soon.'

This, it afterwards appeared, belonged to an old ballad which his father used to sing about 'a piper who played before

Moses!' When on completing his job his friend read aloud the notes, Fr. Burke laughed heartily, and fervently prayed that in an unguarded moment he might not make the awkward mistake of giving out the 'mem' meant for other uses.

The lay guest looks back with special pleasure to some trips to Tivoli, 'under the patronage of St. Martin of *Tours*,' on which Fr. Burke brought him from Rome, accompanied by his novices. They drove there and back, a distance of thirty-six miles. Fr. Burke generally walked over the olive-crowned hills, which spread away for miles—visiting Corinthian temples of the Augustan age, and viewing the steep falls of the Teverone. Sometimes he would hire a donkey, and, getting astride, lead the van with dignified humour. Wit and wisdom and classic lore flashed and made the day a joy. 'Our evenings at San Clemente were equally pleasant. With a majesty of intellect he was yet a child among children.'[1]

Shakspere he considered a good educator. Fr. Burke seemed to have his best plays by heart. 'He would delight us, by not merely repeating, but acting them. His face assumed new features for every character.'

One day Fr. Mullooly, during his excavations, unearthed a valuable pillar known as 'Rosso antiquo.' The Pope called at San Clemente to see it. 'This would look well in the Vatican,' said his Holiness. Fr. Mullooly conveyed without saying it that it looked better where it was. Fr. Burke afterwards gravely sought to persuade Fr. Mullooly that he would be obliged by a sense of holy obedience to surrender the pillar! This would indeed have been a cross. If cut up into mosaics for the ornamentation of altars, the pillar, he said, would be worth 4,000*l.* British.[2]

[1] When viewing the ruins of Horace's villa overhanging the Anio, jokes were freely made even at the expense of sacerdotal friends, including Fr. Horris, then residing at Tivoli Terrace, Kingstown, and whose residence gave rise to obvious punning. Fr. Burke felt with Horace, 'Dulce est desipere in loco.'

[2] Fr. Burke's persiflage veiled deeper thoughts. Speaking of the infinite

A modern fresco at San Clemente depicts a visit of Pope Pius to that basilica, and prominent in the picture is a likeness of Fr. Burke.

The good Prior not only gave shelter and hospitality to the young Irish layman, but did his best to compensate for the monastic gloom which at times prevailed by exerting himself like a true host in trying to amuse him. The Carnival was now on, and the Prior undertook to provide his guest, at short notice, with an Oriental fancy dress. A capacious night-shirt was hastily donned, then a large railway rug was artistically draped round his person, and secured at the waist by the coils of Fr. Burke's plaid muffler. Already the transformation was striking; but when the Prior produced a tasselled fez, or, as it is called by the natives, a tarboosh, and put on a beard, the youth became so changed that his own mother would not have known him. 'The Turk,' as he called himself, proceeded towards the Corso, but had not got far when a volley of pellets made him duck his head. Next day he found that his pursuer, mysteriously muffled, was no other than the Prior of San Clemente, who had followed him a short distance, and then returned to his cell. The young Irishman looked the character of an Oriental so completely that on a subsequent day he again donned the dress and sat for the very effective photograph which is now before us. The costume seems to be that of an Algerian Arab.

Among graver incidents of Fr. Burke's experience he told Br. Paul O'Connor that he was one day reading the Divine Office at San Clemente when a knock came to the door of his cell. On opening it he found a man who said he wanted to make his confession. Fr. Burke replied that when he had finished

sanctity of the sacrifice offered on the altar, he said, when preaching at Fermoy, Aug. 18, 1878: 'What wonder that the Church of God from the very beginning sought out the costliest materials, opened the very hearts of the mountains, that she might bring out the brightest and the most glistening marbles, and ransacked the depths of the sea for "many a gem of purest ray serene" to place upon the altar.'

his Office he would hear him. Ten minutes later he opened the door and said, 'Kneel down.' The man obeyed, but after a moment asked what was he kneeling for. It turned out that the first applicant had gone home, while the second visitor had come upon utterly different business. The man admitted that he had not been at confession for twenty years, and resisted Fr. Burke's exhortations to repentance. But he reasoned with him patiently, and on looking down at the sleeve of his habit he found it, to his amazement, sparkling with tears. Never was conversion more complete. The penitent often returned to the same room, and became as familiar a face as the fresco of St. Alexius.[1]

The twin Orders of St. Dominic and St. Francis maintained in Italy, as at home, the same fraternal intercourse. Amid all his Italian surroundings Fr. Burke did not forget the old land; and on the Feast of St. Patrick 1865 he preached at St. Isidore's the *éloge* of the Apostle of Ireland. Taking his text from Eccles. xliv. 1, 'Let us now praise men of renown,' he said that one of the duties of God's Church to which she had ever been most faithful is the celebration of her saints. 'They are her heroes, and therefore she honours them; just as the world celebrates its own heroes, records their great deeds, and builds up monuments to perpetuate their names and their glory.' In describing the zeal and humility of Patrick he seems to have been influenced by the example of the saint. Do not the following words foreshadow the suffering through which for years he triumphantly laboured? —'Therefore did he make himself the slave and the servant of all, that he might gain all to God. And in his mission of salvation no difficulties retarded him, no labour or sacrifice

[1] One of the old frescoes is of St. Alexius as a mendicant—'the father does not recognise his son, who asks his alms.' Fr. Burke used to say that he also performed a similar feat on his father. The case, however, is wholly different. St. Alexius ran away from his bride the day he had been married, and stalked the world disguised as a pilgrim.

deterred him, no sickness, no infirmity of body or mind overcame him.'

Fr. Burke also preached at Rome the panegyric of St. Agatha, the Patron of the Irish College.

One day when hurrying to attend some great function at the Minerva, his eyes buried in a book as he walked, Burke came into collision on the Piazza Sancte Apostole with a pillar, and, tripped by his habit, he fell heavily to the ground. A report reached Galway about this time that Fr. Tom was dead. Mr. Lynch, an old friend, called at Mrs. Burke's house. Business was suspended and the shutters closed. His sisters were sobbing piteously; the old mother stood apart. Mr. Lynch advanced to console her, but she seemed quite resigned. She had not dropt one tear. 'Long since I gave my boy to God,' she said, 'His holy will be done'—and Mrs. Burke proceeded to discharge her ordinary occupations. Of late years, though she had become very feeble, she continued to walk to church every morning and hear Mass.

What Fr. Burke wrote to Sister Aloysius in 1876, that 'it was a day up and a day down with him,' applied long before, and at no time more than the present. The Vice-Rector of the Irish College hearing how ill he was, called at San Clemente and found him in his cell confined to bed, visibly suffering, and extremely low. The Vice-Rector during the interview happening to take up a volume of Shakspere, the Prior asked if he knew anything of that great master, and received for reply that in the Levitical family from which he sprang he had little opportunity of hearing much of him. The sufferer, raising himself from his pillow, then proceeded to recite for his visitor, with grand elocutionary effect, some of the finest Shaksperian scenes, gracefully prefacing each with a few explanatory words. The good priest was greatly interested by the unlooked-for treat, and came away much the better for his visit.

How completely Fr. Burke's mind was saturated in

Shakspere is shown by phrases which occur in his discourses. Hamlet asks 'why thy canonized bones have burst their cerements?' Apostrophising St. Laurence O'Toole, Burke asks, 'Why didst thou not burst the cerements of the tomb?' &c. And in a sermon on the Catholic Church, 'At the sound of his voice the cerements of sin burst.'

The late Rev. P. J. Nolan will be remembered for the energy with which he put down Donnybrook Fair, and for his activity in raising funds to build the handsome church that now marks the site of former orgies. How marvellously *au courant* Pius IX. was with such Dublin doings as tended to God's honour has often surprised Irish visitors to Rome, and his relish for a joke was no less proverbial. 'Fr. Nolan had made a pilgrimage to Rome,' said Burke, 'to try and persuade the Holy Father to unlock from the treasury of the Church some special favours for those who materially aided his new church. One day the good priest was announced. His Holiness exclaimed, with that pleasant twinkle in his eye so familiar through the portraits, "What, Fr. Nolan, who put down Donnybrook Fair! Our Carnival had better look sharp."'

Fiddling, feasting, carnivalling, masking,

conveys also some idea of the more vulgar Donnybrook.

Notwithstanding the cordial praise of Pio Nono so handsomely bestowed by Fr. Burke in his Lectures, it must be confessed that an expression which fell from his Holiness at this time wounded him. He got leave to introduce his novices to the Holy Father, and he had no sooner presented them than the Pope was heard to mutter '*Feniani.*' The Fenian rising had just taken place, and the word had become very familiar. Those who knew the temperament of Pio Nono will hardly doubt that he meant the remark for a flash of humour; but had it been a flash of Jove's lightning it could not have seared its way more fatally to the sensibilities of his visitors. The fact that the novices and their master

had come from Tallaght—the scene of the Fenian camp—gave point to the joke. One of the most gifted of the novices had a red face. The Pope, with an arch-smile, muttered 'Red Republican.'

At the same audience, the Commissary-General of Buenos Ayres tried to kiss the Papal slipper, but was so obese that he failed; and, without waiting for the Pope to put out his hand, he seized and kissed it. The Holy Father, on hearing that he was a Spaniard, said, 'He is a Spaniard and a half.' The Pope was a reader of newspapers, and, in conversation with Bishop Conroy, asked what was 'Ho-mè Ru'-lè.'

There was one great personage in Rome wielding unbounded power, in whose presence Fr. Burke never felt restraint—Cardinal Barnabo, Prefect of the Propaganda. Fr. Burke had frequent interviews with him, partly in getting approved the Constitutions of a new order of religious, but also, as he told a friend, in giving a helping hand—though unofficially—in the conduct of correspondence.

The man who is called to preside over this vast tribunal (says Fr. Burke) is, next to the supreme head of the Church, the most important personage in the world. He must be full of wisdom; he must have the most varied knowledge for the conditions of each different country, with an energy superhuman. He has four thousand bishops under him. They come to him with all their difficulties, doubts, and dangers. He is the centre of that mighty organisation by which the Church goes on, destined, until the end of time, to conquer. And to this position of unexampled labour and responsibility was Barnabo called; and, whether as secretary or cardinal of the Propaganda, he has been, for a quarter of a century, the very centre of that mighty system; and forth from his mind, from the zeal of his heart, from the superhuman natural energy of his character, intensified by his devotion, came that wonderful power which has made the Propaganda the real consolation of the Church for the last twenty years. A strange sight it was, indeed, that it has been my privilege more than once to witness, to stand there in the Cardinal's chamber, where he receives the various missionaries, to see them—the grave Oriental Bishop, in his

gorgeous robes, grand-looking and kingly—speaking of the sorrows and cares of a people who had never been heard of in this Western land—to see this man, who had journeyed for months from the cradle land of the world! Outside the door is a Jesuit, waiting to be heard, who has come from the Polar Regions of North America, and whose eyes have for many years scarcely seen anything but snow and frozen rivers. Perhaps standing side by side with him is the bronzed and embrowned foreign missionary from the Cape of Good Hope, or the strange-looking Chinese missionary, who, perhaps, only escaped from prison to recount his trials, and on his return bear the tortures of those who were languishing in their cells.

In a word, a motley group, representing the universal apostolicity, were there; and he, with a patience that nothing could overcome, and with an energy that nothing could break down, was answering all. For God had prepared him, by his exile and contact with the outer world, for this mighty work. He acquired the widest knowledge and experience of the locality of each diocese, and the wants of each people. And so he laboured from the morning watch even until night, working, toiling as a slave in the vineyard of God. For him there was no rest. His work was holy. And what was his recreation? The moment that he could snatch an hour from the labours of the day, that hour was spent with Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament; or he went, with hurried steps, to some convent or place where a mission was going on, to instruct little children; or he passed into the confessional to become the victim of his zeal. Everyone cared for his mind and heart except one, and that one was his own great self.

One object of Barnabo's solicitude and labour had been the restoration to England of that ancient Episcopacy which in the sixteenth century had been shattered; and no doubt the reconstruction of the Dominican province had a share in his projects. Barnabo liked Burke so much that both were often asked to meet each other at the hospitable board of the Irish College.

Fr. Burke described an incident which occurred at this time, when lecturing at New Orleans on 'the Church in America:'

Any one who wishes to mark attentively the course of events of this

world must recognise in all that he sees around him the hand of God and the hand of the devil—God influencing all things for good, and the Devil coming in on all sides and trying to spoil God's work. Now, amongst the works of God is the Christian religion and the Catholic Church, and amongst the many means the devil employs to gain his end—viz. to inspire nations 'and peoples with a kind of dread of the Church,' he says to the nations, 'Don't listen to her; don't have anything to say to her. She will corrupt, she will bewitch you.' He gives them no reason for this. He has no reason for it. Nothing must strike a man more at first sight than the strange repugnance and unreasoning fear with which so many sectarians regard the Catholic Church. I remember a very enlightened, highly cultivated English lady came to Rome with her daughter. The daughter became a Catholic and I received her into the Church. Her mother came to me the same day, wild with grief, the tears streaming from her eyes—a heart-broken woman. She says, 'What have you done to my child? Oh! you wicked man, what have you done to my child? You have ruined my child and broken my heart.' I said, 'How is that?' 'Well,' she said, 'you have made a Catholic of my daughter.' 'Yes, that is true. Under God, I have been the means of making a Catholic of her. But is that a sufficient reason for breaking your heart?' 'Yes, it is,' said she. 'You are a well-educated lady,' I said to her, 'I simply ask you one question. What point is there in the teachings or practice of the Church to which you object?' She paused for a moment. 'Well,' she said, 'I don't know; but I know that you have bewitched my child and broken my heart.' 'Can you find fault,' I said, 'with any one doctrine that your child has embraced?' She said she could not. And yet the woman acknowledged to me, 'If my child had declared herself an Atheist I would not be so grieved as I am for her to become a Catholic,' and that without any reason under heaven. Well, as it happened, within twelve months I had the happiness of receiving this same mother into the Church.

Denis Florence MacCarthy, who, like Longfellow, happened to be in Rome at this time, urged him to hear a sermon from Burke. The American poet was so much struck by his eloquence that he asked MacCarthy to introduce him to the Dominican. The result was that both bards met at the hospitable board of the Prior of San Clemente. MacCarthy celebrated the event in

some lines which he sent to the Rev. B. Russell, then Provincial of the Order.

Longfellow used to delight in listening to him portray the eccentricities of Italian life (writes an eye-witness, who proceeds to describe the itinerant Roman dentist already noticed at page 237). The great preacher played the part of the clever *cavadenti*, while the author of 'Evangeline' would take the part of the unfortunate *vittima* —of the quack. The pleasantries and associations of the Irish Prior of San Clemente and the author of the 'Golden Legend' are unique, as they are suggestive and interesting in the lives of two great men in the nineteenth century—great in two spheres, apparently so wide of each other—a pleasant reminiscence of the laureate orator of Ireland and poet laureate of America.[1]

Meanwhile it may be mentioned that Fr. Burke, at this time, preached during the month of Mary. May has been always a favourite month with poets, and it is not surprising that Longfellow joined in the devotions as well as the author of 'Waiting for the May.' Longfellow seemed so liberal that Fr. Burke had great hopes of his adhesion to the Church. The following passage occurs in one of Burke's American homilies:

Everything in the Church's teaching harmonises with the works of the human intelligence; everything in her moral law harmonises with the wants of man's soul; everything in her liturgy or devotions harmonises with man's imagination and sense, in so far as both help him to a union with God. And so everything in the Church's devotion accords with the nature around us and within us, and with that reflection of nature in its highest and most beautiful form which is in the spirit and in the genius of the Blessed Virgin Mary. I remember once speaking with a very distinguished poet—one of a worldwide reputation and a name which is a household word wherever the English language is spoken—and he said to me, 'Father, I am not a Catholic, yet I have no keener pleasure or greater enjoyment than to witness Catholic ceremonial, to study Catholic devotion, to investigate Catholic doctrines; nor do I find,' he said, 'in all that nature or the resources of intellect open before me greater food for poetic and enthusiastic thought than that which is suggested to me by the Catholic Church.'

[1] Letter of Very Rev. J. D. Power, formerly of San Clemente, Aug. 7, 1884.

And so it is not without reason that the Church is able to account for every iota of her liturgy and devotions.

Bishop Whelan was fond of securing Fr. Burke for those little dinners which friends pleasantly remember, and to meet a bishop is one of the few occasions on which a friar is presumed to dine out. The last evening Fr. Burke passed at Dr. Whelan's he sang 'Barney O'Hea,' with pianoforte accompaniment, adding that he had not done so since he sang it for Longfellow at Rome, who assured him that of all Irish ballads he liked that the best.

The thoroughly Irish hospitality of the Prior of San Clemente gave a new attraction to the Eternal City. In 1866, during the visit of an old Galway man to Rome, Fr. Burke summoned him to his table, and on the guest arriving he was surprised to find forty others, including several bishops. The 'old Galway man' was Alderman Tarpy; and the proximity of the Tarpeian Rock gave rise to much obvious joking.

Mr. (now Sir Charles) Gavan Duffy, who had already held high office in Australia, and was destined to become Prime Minister there, and afterwards Speaker, wintered in Rome at this time. Old memories became awakened. We remember how fascinated the Galway youth had been by the tone and brilliancy of a national journal which owed both to Gavan Duffy. Both men met for the first time, and the impressions of the ex-Minister will be found in the following document which he has placed at our disposal:

It was in the winter of 1866 at Rome that I saw Fr. Burke for the first time. I went there with my family to avoid the rigour of December in the north, and the morning after our arrival he was good enough to call on us. I had been ten years away, more than ten thousand miles from Ireland, and when his name was announced I barely recognised it as that of a Dominican Father who had become a popular preacher in the interval. To be a popular preacher is a reputation I had known various persons attain without finding myself prodigiously moved when I came to listen to them; and no one could possibly assume less on the strength of his success than the

frank, genial priest who fell into cordial talk on the spot, and who demeaned himself like an old friend. He was preaching at the time in one of the churches in the Piazza del Popolo, where sermons are delivered weekly for the English, Irish, and American visitors of various creeds who winter at Rome. I took an early opportunity of hearing him, and his sermon was one of the most profound surprises of my life. I had learned in the interval, through constant intercourse, what keenness of insight, natural humour, and knowledge of character Fr. Burke possessed. It was impossible to know him at all without recognising that he was a man of many gifts and a wide range of information, but I was not prepared for the power and grasp of his pulpit oratory. I had heard all the contemporary preachers of note, in the Catholic Church at least, and all the Parliamentary orators of the day, but I was moved and impressed by that sermon beyond any human utterance to which I had ever listened. I despair of conveying the sort of impression it made upon me; but I think persuasiveness was its most striking characteristic. You were gradually drawn to adopt the preacher's views as the only ones compatible with truth and good sense. He marched straight to a fixed end, and all the road he passed seemed like a track of intellectual light. His accent was Irish, but his discourse bore no other resemblance to any Irish utterance with which I was familiar. We have the school of Grattan and the school of O'Connell, the artificial and the spontaneous, into which most Irish oratory may be distributed; but it belonged as little to one as to the other. The lucid narrative which, without arguing, was the best of arguments; the apt illustration, which summed up his case in a happy phrase, might have recalled Plunket; but in truth, like most original men, he resembled no one but himself.

After that winter in Rome it was more than a dozen years before I heard him preach again, and in the interval he had been in feeble health and sometimes prostrate with suffering. It was in the Jesuits' Church, Farm Street, London, where he made the annual *éloge* of St. Ignatius. The subject had been exhausted by a hundred predecessors in that pulpit; it had perhaps special difficulties for a Dominican, and his health was known to be failing fast. But it stands out in my memory as one of the three or four greatest orations I have heard. It was a fresh character-portrait, drawn in bold striking lines, and set in a narrative lucid as the waters of the Mediterranean. Again the master charm was persuasiveness. I could not help thinking, if he had not already found his life task, here was a man who could plead the cause of his native country with more

winning force than anyone to whom I have listened in later years—perhaps than anyone to whom I ever listened. He did not wield the Thor's hammer of O'Connell, crushing and crashing whatever impeded its stroke, and he could not thrill with the passionate enthusiasm sometimes evoked by Thomas Meagher; but to win the assent of the conscience, and convince the judgment, no one excelled him. Much of this force was mesmeric, the outcome of the whole moral and intellectual nature of the man. The orator is not always made; sometimes, like the poet, his gifts are born with him. Fr. Burke was a born orator; the charm of voice and eye and action combined to produce his wonderful effects. When his words were printed, much of the subtle spell vanished. One rejoiced to hear him over and over again, but re-read him rarely, I think. Other generations who can know him only as a writer will find it hard to understand how he came to be regarded not merely as the greatest preacher, but in later years the foremost orator of his race.

That winter of 1866 in Rome holds a pleasant place in my memory. It was a rare enjoyment to visit the monuments and historic sites of such a city with such a guide. If a holiday-maker has seen the birthplace or the grave of the local artist or preacher, poet or patriot, where chance conducts his steps, he counts his day well spent. But where the painter is Raphael or Claude, the poet Tasso, the patriot Rienzi, and the preacher Saul of Tarsus or St. Matthew the Evangelist, written words are but a pale shadow of the feelings they evoke. To visit for the first time the noble halls and galleries, cabinets and courts of the Vatican, which vie in beauty with the treasures they contain, and make all other museums mean and dingy, is an education in art; and what an historical study is the Collegio Romano, where one might see the identical rooms occupied by eminent missionaries and saints of the Society of Jesus two centuries ago, still containing the books and furniture they used when they were students or professors, and its noble library, where it was a pleasant surprise to find the works of Savonarola on its shelves, and the portrait of Galileo in its observatory? And where can the early history of Christendom be better studied than in the Catacombs, the hiding place of early popes and saints, and richer than the Colosseum itself in the blood of Christian martyrs? Of the early history of Ireland there is San Pietro in Montorio, where our martyrs lie buried. But nothing in the capital of the Christian world, not St. Peter's or the Sovereign Pontiff, was a sight fit to match in interest to Irishmen the exhibition of the Accademia Polyglotta, where students

from Asia, Africa, Australasia, and Europe spoke, each of them, the language or chanted the music of his birthplace, and from three continents and their outlying islands the students bore names that marked them of our own indestructible people. The remote history of Europe, when the children of Conn gave missionaries to half the known world, seemed revived again in that spectacle. What a volume steeped in tears, but illuminated too with glorious incidents, might be written on the Irish monuments and institutions in Rome! His own San Clemente furnished my friend with a constant text, for its Irish friars were the hosts and often the trusted counsellors of princes, from Charles and James Stuart and Charles Edward in a later generation down to Albert Edward of Wales in our own day; and, what is nobler and better, the constant guardian of Irish interests, when Ireland had a foreign policy and a diplomatic corps hid under the black or brown robes of monks and professors. And he did not forget that other Irish house founded by the great Franciscan who was ambassador from the Confederation of Kilkenny to the Holy See, or the more modern college in whose humble church the heart of O'Connell is preserved. Mangan and Fr. Meehan have made the graves of the Earls familiar to Irish readers; but when the time comes there will be work for other pious hands in honouring the memory of later exiles. There is a granite obelisk in the Piazza del Popolo which Julius Cæsar set up in that place before the Redeemer descended on the earth, and which is covered with hieroglyphics sculptured by Egyptian artists before Moses received the tables of the law on Mount Sinai; it has seen cities grow and perish, generations and cycles come and go, the Goth and the Gaul in turn masters of Rome, the piratical soldier of fortune and the crowned emperor hold the cradle of Christianity to pillage, but it still lifts its eternal face to the sun as fresh in the days of Bismarck as in the days of Cæsar. The eloquent Dominican saw in this Eastern monument a type of the Celtic race, destined to outlive chance and change and remain fresh and imperishable in the old age of the world.

Fr. Burke's flow of pleasant talk was wise and witty by turns. I will not, after so many years, attempt to recal any fragments of it. One weighty saying, indeed, I remember, because I have often quoted it since. Speaking of Frederick Lucas's memorable mission to Rome in 1855 on behalf of the second order of the Irish clergy, he said Lucas failed because the case of Ireland against England was necessarily ill understood at Rome. The Holy Father and the Propaganda saw every day men who bore names which they had read in English history,

and who were officials of the Roman Court, Talbots, Howards, and Cliffords. The only Irishman they saw was probably some priest with an unpronounceable name, and whose Latin or Italian jarred upon Southern ears. They received habitually touring English nobles and ecclesiastics; and national prejudice, which is strong enough in an ordinary Englishman, is stronger in a noble, and strongest of all in a priest. And this class prejudice (he remarked) was not local but general; one of the bitterest enemies of Poland he had ever encountered was a Russian nun, probably of noble birth. The Poles being a Catholic nation did not counterbalance the fact that they were bad subjects to his Majesty the Czar.

To the question why he did not himself undertake this neglected duty, of representing Ireland truly to the Holy See, he replied that Rome was the head-quarters of the Church militant, where its statesmen and rulers were assembled, and he, for his part, was simply a private soldier in the ranks.

It was part of his Irish nature, part perhaps of the predisposition of a man of genius, that he loved to relieve a mind burdened with thought by constant badinage. He overflowed with comic stories, of which he was himself oftentimes the butt. I have heard him tell a room full of his guests at San Clemente anecdotes of this kind which only a person of unusual *naïveté* would accept, or was expected to accept, *au pied de la lettre.* One was the prank he professed to have played on an American bishop of Irish descent with whom he travelled from Cork to Dublin. The tourist was eager to see the historic places of which he had heard so often, and Fr. Burke declared that he thought it a pity not to gratify him on the spot. Out of the window of the railway carriage he showed him in turn the field of the Boyne, the church of Dungannon, the Parliament House of the Irish Confederation, the city sacked for three days by Cromwell's fanatics, the river from which Sarsfield sailed away to France, and the sites of the monster meetings at Tara and Mullaghmast.[1]

Fr. Kenny, O.P., to whom we owe many interesting facts, tells us that the subsequent Prime Minister addressed a letter

[1] Critics will notice that this repeats, with a slight variation of detail, an incident already described; but we did not feel warranted in mutilating the paper which Sir Gavan Duffy entrusted to us. He is mistaken in supposing the trick on the American Bishop fabulous. It is well known to Dominicans that, though Fr. Burke embellished it in recital, the trick was really played.

to Fr. Burke, in which he strongly urged him to come to Australia.

I cannot fix with any certainty the date at which the correspondence you inquire about took place (writes Sir C. G. Duffy), but I remember very well the feelings from which it sprang. Fr. Burke possessed missionary gifts in an eminent degree, and there was no place on the globe where, to my thinking, they could have been used with such prodigious results as in Australia and Australasia. On that continent and those islands are springing up a new France, Italy, Germany, Spain, and England, and by the labours of half-a-dozen men of his calibre, all the Catholic Church lost at the Reformation might be regained in the newest new world. I did not want to see him a Bishop or Archbishop, however fit he was for these dignities, but a preacher, a missionary, a new St. Francis. The adventurous and laborious population who are occupying and civilising these countries are very accessible to generous and humane influences, and such a man, who would live the life of an apostle among them and whose tongue was touched with the fire of conviction, would, I felt persuaded, have an apostle's career.

Nowhere would Fr. Burke have been a greater success than in Australia. The Archbishop of Sydney but expressed the sense of a vast portion of that great colony when, in his recent lecture on 'Self-Culture,' delivered before the Literary and Debating Society of Sydney, his Grace pronounced a grand eulogium on Fr. Burke.[1]

The celebration, in June 1867, of the eighteenth centenary of the martyrdom of SS. Peter and Paul, was an event second only in magnitude to the Œcumenical Council, with which it opened connection. The Sovereign Pontiff called every bishop in the world to assemble round the shrines of the Apostles, and to assist at the canonisation of twenty-five saints. Thereupon mitres rose up in the vales of the Himalayas, glittered on the Alleghany Mountains, emerged from tropical climes and Arctic regions, and even the Antipodes

[1] Reported in the *Tablet*, Jan. 31, 1885. Previously, at a literary and debating society in Sydney, Mr. P. Farrell delivered an able essay on 'The Life and Labours of Father Tom Burke.'

sent their contingent. From the jungles of India to the Curragh of Kildare, ecclesiastical life was astir. Five hundred and ten prelates, 2,500 priests, and 100,000 laics, of whom many were red men and negroes, traversed smiling prairies and sandy deserts. Some of the bishops we learn were 'mounted on camels for fourteen hours for forty days.' Mostly aged men, what wonder if a few faltered and fell? The Bishop of Vancouver's Island was summoned to another Eternal City; the same remark applies to Dr. Kilduff, Bishop of Ardagh. The prelates of Spain walked in procession through the streets of Barcelona to the port of embarkation. An interesting spectacle was presented in the Chinese Bishop of Nankin, who, on seeing the Pope for the first time, prostrated himself in tears, exclaiming, '*Tu es Petrus!*' Fr. Daniel, who accompanied the Irish contingent, tells us that the Syrian bishop, according to Eastern custom, took the Pope's hands in both of his, raised them to his head in token of submission, then to his lips, then to his heart, signifying that in all he could do, speak, or think, he was of his Holiness the most docile son.

The discipline and devotion with which these dispersed soldiers of Christ marched to the centre of unity, not in obedience to a command, as at the Vatican Council, but to the whispered desire of the Pope, carried a high moral significance which delighted Fr. Burke. The advance of such enormous columns preached with eloquence the faith and unity of Catholicism, and showed that its vitality had not been impaired by time. But, while edified by the grandeur of the ceremonial, Burke was not the man to shut his eyes to the eccentricities presented in some individual members of the Church militant. Amongst them were Oriental patriarchs and prelates of every rite in communion with Rome. The Armenian and the Chaldean, the Greek and the Copt, the Maronite and Slavonic, the Roumanian and the Melchite mustered. They were men of the holiest nature, but some-

times of the most fantastic contour. One, accompanied by an interpreter, was especially desirous of procuring well-authenticated cases of diabolic possession and obsession. To those who may not have explored the somewhat occult volumes which treat on this subject, it may be explained that, though any person in mortal sin is regarded as 'possessed,' it is distinctly taught that there are times when the devil inhabits the body of his unhappy victim. In obsession he assails his prey from without, and presents strange phantoms to his senses, but does not enter his body. Even in possession he cannot inhabit the soul, much less master the free will, but he may fearfully increase the power of temptation, overpower the body, and produce madness, in which state the person possessed may commit actions outwardly sinful. Fr. Burke told his friend, the Rev. T. Mulkerrin, that he had been asked by an African prelate who was compiling data on these points if he had ever known any instances of possession. 'Oh! such cases are quite common in my native town,' he replied; 'a shoemaker went out, and, after drinking freely, bought twelve balls of hemp, six lasts, ten awls, two pounds of cobbler's wax, fifty whangs of leather, with pegs and sprigs *ad libitum*, all of which he swallowed!' 'The devil must clearly have entered into that man,' replied the African prelate, as he noted in detail the articles swallowed. 'I differ from you,' responded Fr. Burke; 'after bolting so big a meal I should just like to know what room remained for the devil? That *you* should have swallowed so much is quite as wonderful as the feat of the Galway shoemaker.'

Not the least imposing part of the prolonged ceremonial of that year was the gorgeous procession on Corpus Christi. Those who witnessed it will retain a vivid impression of the solemn dignity with which Fr. Burke, representing San Clemente, as some said, walked in the grand *cortège*. The Dominicans take precedence of the Franciscans, for although the order of Assisi had the start of the Dominicans, yet the

Franciscan Rule had not been approved by Rome until some days subsequent to that of St. Dominic.

Fr. Burke had now completed the full three years of his tenure as Prior of San Clemente, and was looking forward to the resumption of his work in Ireland, when Archbishop Joachim Gonin wistfully fixed his eyes on him in the hope of persuading him to become Coadjutor Archbishop of the Port of Spain. Fr. Burke's title would be, until succeeding to the See, 'Bishop of Alabanda *in partibus infidelium*,' with jurisdiction over Trinidad, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, and Tobago. The archiepiscopal province also includes Jamaica, Honduras, Demerara, and Curaçoa. He did not give the idea much encouragement, and on Fr. Ford, Canon of Trinidad, requesting him to consider it, replied, 'I would prefer Irish stew to a Turkish bath.' Fr. Burke informed Mr. Haverty that, if he had not happened to be in Rome, the bulls would have been issued for his consecration. Later on another Dominican, Fr. William O'Carroll, accepted the post, but his exertions in the vineyard beneath a tropical sun abridged a career full of usefulness, and within the present year a third Dominican Bishop—Dr. Hyland—has succumbed. It will be seen that in 1874 Sir Patrick Keenan was charged, on behalf of Archbishop Gonin, to renew these overtures to Fr. Burke.

All this time his humility was such that he went out of his way to make his appearance the reverse of attractive. Some Irish ladies having arrived in Rome, who claimed his help as a guide, they observed him during successive days keeping his engagements with a neglected growth of bristly beard and his person wrapped in a cloak which displayed an accumulation of mud splashes—some of Irish origin. They reminded him that even in this he resembled St. Dominic, whose biographer describes 'his black cloak showing marks of long journeys through wind and rain.' 'Ah,' replied Fr. Burke, dryly, 'Rome is a grand place for people who don't

care to be clean.' And yet these ladies had seen the King and Queen of Naples stop their carriage in the street to converse for ten minutes with the poor Dominican.

He had such a grave way of saying queer things that many persons felt it a heresy to doubt him. He told that an Italian artist begged him to give sittings for a great picture he was painting of 'The Temptation in the Desert.' 'For our Lord, of course,' said the ladies. 'No, for the devil.' And to this hour they believe the assurance with steadfast faith.

Fr. Burke's humility was learned in the best of schools—the school of suffering (writes Fr. Clarke, S.J.) But, indeed, from his start as a missionary preacher, his humility was conspicuous. He seemed naturally so humble that few ever suspected the poignant pain it gave him to cultivate habits calculated to earn the contempt of worldlings. In order to realise the full extent of his sacrifice we must peer into his thoughts, and there read the book of his soul. Addressing the Young Men's Society at Cork, in June 1874, he incidentally remarked:

> You may despise a man without injuring or insulting him—you may simply hold him in utter contempt; and I believe *that* is worse than either insult or injury. I myself would rather be injured and insulted than despised. Anything but that. I remember once speaking with an Englishman of the treatment Ireland received from the English. I said that she had been injured and insulted by them in every way. I was angered when I spoke. 'Oh!' said the Englishman, 'don't get angry. We don't insult you, we really don't. We don't intend to injure you. We only despise you.' And that made me ten times more angry. Anything but contempt.

Fr. Burke's prejudices softened eventually. In his pleasant lecture on Music at Liverpool, in April 1883, he said he had lived amongst them for years, and he could say that a little alcohol never took more kindly to a piece of sugar than did an Englishman on meeting a genial Irishman.

Father Burke (observes Mr. Lane) was of all things an Irishman, and in nothing was he more so than in his voice and accent. Sheridan said that an Irishman should carry his honour and his brogue unsullied to the grave. Burke did both. It is the fashion to deride our brogue. I have heard two who had it meted out to them in full measure—O'Connell and Burke. In no other form of the language could I find a medium more perfectly adapted to sustain and reflect the full freight of thought that it bore upon its brimming tide. It seemed capable of all forms of expression, and, for my part, I would not barter it for the most accomplished drawl of a West-End drawing-room or the cold primness of Oxford or Cambridge.

Rome was now specially full of Anglican converts, but a number of English visitors who held aloof from the fold of Peter 'wintered' there too. Fr. Burke, on accepting an invitation from an English Countess to attend her *soirée*, found himself almost the only Catholic in the room. The great preacher of Santa Maria del Popolo was asked to sing. 'I only sing polemic songs,' he replied. 'Oh, pray sing them,' was ejaculated on every side. 'I began "The Devil among the Soupers,"' said Fr. Burke, and I soon found that the company, headed by Lady S—— herself, enjoyed it as thoroughly as though my audience hailed from Stoney Batter.'

There can be no doubt that Fr. Tom's pleasant ways often attracted Protestants who finally became converts. Had he been an austere ecclesiastic these adhesions would have been much fewer. The Bishop of Clogher writes, April 8, 1884:—

I was once present at a sort of operatic burlesque given in Rome by Fr. Burke and a young English gentleman, a Protestant, but a convert in expectation. It was ineffably funny to hear Burke and him imitating the *altissimo* notes, and the quavers, shakes, &c., of the great vocal performers. The whole business was bewitchingly entertaining.

This served as a good rehearsal for a much more elaborate performance between the Père Monsabré and Fr. Burke. Dr. Lilly, O.P., observes:

I doubt if any living member of our Order can compare with Burke as an orator. Père Monsabré, the Lent preacher at Notre Dame, is the only living Dominican who can sway the masses with a power equal to his. Monsabré and Burke were trained in the same school, and resemble each other in many particulars. Both are endowed with the same fervid temperament and the same unfailing command of language.

The Bishop of Kilmore met the rival Dominicans at this time. His Lordship has been kind enough to give us his recollections of Fr. Burke, and the following is the portion which belongs to this stage of our story:

I was in Rome in 1867; Monsabré, the celebrated French Dominican preacher, was also at San Clemente. On one occasion Fr. Burke gave a very large party, to which many high ecclesiastics were invited, including the late Cardinal Cullen. It was an occasion not to be easily forgotten. The black spectre of cholera had just then entered Rome, but the flow of wit from Burke and Monsabré made us forget the gloom it brought. To say the truth, we were all proud of the two distinguished sons of St. Dominic. It was hard to decide which was the greater genius. Burke gave out his witty things first in English for the accommodation of the English-speaking guests. The French and Italians thought we had lost all our ecclesiastical gravity, we laughed so at Burke's sayings; but we soon had our revenge when he told them the same stories in French and Italian. Their sides ached with laughter. Monsabré was a ventriloquist as well as a wit. He would make you believe he had captured a bee at one time; at another that he was sawing timber with an old, rusty saw. Burke was inimitable at the bagpipes—that is, imitating them.[1]

It may be explained that Monsabré, while seeming to catch on a window a blue-bottle fly or bee, imitated its buzz, from the *bass abandon* indicative of freedom to the *falsetto* of closing capture. Monsabré had succeeded Lacordaire, and had now become Honorary Canon of Notre Dame,

[1] Letter of the Bishop of Kilmore to the Author, May 6, 1884. It may be added that Fr. Burke 'was not only a master of pure Italian, but to his stories and dialogues he added great effect by the use of slang Italian.'—*Rev. B. Russell, O.P., to the Author.*

and also of the Cathedral of Metz. He evinced from his childhood marked powers of mimicry, and began even on the steps of the altar. The priest whose Mass he served gabbled over the Latin with such haste that little Monsabré, in giving the responses, imported to them a jerkiness which the priest recognised as a travestie, and sternly reprehended. When Burke and Monsabré met it was diamond cut diamond between them. Both felt that

> A little nonsense now and then
> Is useful to the wisest men.

Bishop Delany was present, as he tells us, when the pair produced an Italian *burletta* full of richest harmony and humour. Indeed, had they cared to go more in earnest to work, Gilbert and Sullivan might look to their laurels. The amateur opera was performed in San Clemente on a large table, in presence of Cardinal Cullen, Bishop Butler, and many other prelates. Nothing could be more piquant than 'the business' between Monsabré and Burke. The latter, however, was stage manager, orchestra, prompter, and property man as well as *prima donna*. Denis Florence MacCarthy was among the visitors, and he said that if the Bishops could have been photographed as they laughed the picture would have been one of priceless piquancy.

Fr. Burke's command of Italian eloquence led Fr. Doussott, then Master of the Italian Novices at Santa Sabina, to invite him to address them in a series of discourses couched in the language of the country. The native Fathers and novices preferred his Italian to that of the more legitimate instructors.

With the object of interesting and amusing his friends Fr. Burke was fond of putting the Pope in a position of friendly familiarity with him. The following is not an article of faith, but, as characteristic of the man, must not be excluded.

Describing a grand *levée* at the Vatican, where all the

great English converts assembled in their strength, the Pope, he said, turned to him for information as to the antecedents of several persons who were seen advancing. 'Thomas, my son, who may this be?' 'The Duchess of Leeds, most Holy Father.' 'What a colossal figure!' 'Yes, Holy Father, faith moves mountains!' We will not say 'with that his Holiness laughed like for to split,' but perhaps it may be assumed that he appreciated the readiness of this scriptural citation.[1]

He said that the Pope on another day made a reply in Italian, and which translated was, 'You're a *Janius*.' That day Burke asked all sorts of ecclesiastics, 'Am I a janius? Deny it at your peril, for the Holy Father says I am.'

Fr. Burke, different from a great sacerdotal wit still living, did not shine at repartee. The points in which his strength lay are already familiar. His smart replies are easily gathered.

The Capuchin Church and Catacombs at Rome present in several respects a remarkable spectacle. The light which burns before the altar is enclosed in a monk's skull; the chains whereby it is suspended are formed by a multiplicity of joints gathered from fleshless fingers. In the mortuary chapel skeletons, fully draped in cowl and cassock, take their stand; when viewed from behind the resemblance to living monks is so great that visitors often receive a start by the ghastly results of a fuller acquaintance. Fr. Ashe, a Dublin Capuchin, remarked of the head house of his Order that he would end his course in joy if his own remains should be consigned to its Catacombs. 'They will never make an *Ash*-pit of it,' responded Fr. Burke. To see the full point of the reply it is well to tell what manner of man Ashe was. He was very

[1] Sir Samuel Ferguson contributed to *Blackwood* an amusing sketch, since reprinted, called 'Father Tom and the Pope.' But his *padre* was Fr. Tom Maguire, and the remark said to have made Gregory XVI. laugh was 'Your Holiness is not the first *Pope* that I floored.' The Rev. T. P. Pope had been Maguire's opponent in controversy.

sarcastic, and fond of tripping up talkers with execrable puns. He could never agree with Cardinal Cullen, under whose jurisdiction he lived, or even with his own Order, from which he at last withdrew.

In 1867, just before Fr. Burke's tenure of office expired, a third discovery was made beneath San Clemente. As relic after relic came to light, Frs. Mullooly and Burke fairly divided the excitement between them. One declared that it was the original cell of St. Clement, the other pronounced it to be the cavern near San Clemente to which, A.D. 999, the Emperor Otho retired with his confessor and abandoned himself to holy exercises.

Shortly after the termination of his priorship in Rome, Fr. Burke returned to Ireland and was assigned to the convent, 30 Rutland Square,[1] in connection with St. Saviour's, Dominick Street, Dublin.

On September 9, 1867, we find him lecturing on Ecclesiastical Architecture. The lecture proved so successful as an aid to the charity for which it was given, that he repeated it at Wicklow and other places. On the 22nd he preached at St. Mary's, Rathmines, to liquidate the debt incurred in the decoration of that fine temple. The Rev. P. J. Ryan, now Archbishop of Philadelphia, was then in Dublin, and followed Fr. Burke's lecture with another, 'On the Use of the Beautiful in Catholic Worship.' That evening our Dominican called on a friend and rapturously expressed the pleasure with which he had listened to it; and we believe that the great intimacy which afterwards subsisted between Dr. Ryan and Fr. Burke dated from this incident. Fr. Burke's elation was not a little stimulated by the opening, a day or two before, after three centuries of proscription from London, of the handsome Dominican Church at Haverstock Hill.

Among his speeches at this time was one commendatory of St. Bridget's Orphanage, 'Though Ireland lost her posi-

[1] The Rev. J. T. Towers, Provincial O.P., to the Author.

tion as a nation, and lost her wealth, and once or twice lost her temper, yet she had never lost her faith.'

An eminent Protestant preacher and elocutionist, the Rev. Chancellor Tisdall, D.D., wishing to hear Fr. Burke, repaired to Dominick Street one evening in Holy Week, when a Tenebræ service [1] was being sung.

I have seldom listened (he writes) to a more admirable discourse. The preacher's mode of treating his subject—God's hatred of sin—was original and argumentative, and the application and peroration were among the most powerful specimens of pulpit oratory I ever heard. Occasionally, his bursts of eloquence somewhat reminded me of Lacordaire, whom I once heard preach a Lenten sermon at the Church of St. Roch, in Paris, many years before. I was brought to hear Fr. Burke by a friend who was anxious to have my opinion of him as a preacher. The only seats we could get in the densely crowded building were in the gallery at the west end. I was, therefore, at a considerable distance from the speaker, but so distinct was his utterance, and so skilfully managed his voice, that I did not miss a word of his fine sermon, which occupied fully an hour in delivery. The most effective voices and the most agreeable to listen to that I ever heard were those of O'Connell, Isaac Butt, Chief Justice Whiteside, Mr. Spurgeon, and Fr. Burke.

Dr. Cullen was the first Irish bishop who wore a cardinal's hat, and on his arrival from Rome he held a *levée* at Clonliffe College to receive he congratulations of his friends. This *levée* was marked by great pomp and circumstance. But we are reminded by Dr. J. B. Kavanagh, a most observant ecclesiastic, that it was the lowly friar, Fr. Burke, and not the new Cardinal, who seemed to engross all the attention and homage. Within the next few days a subscription list was opened for the purpose of purchasing a coach for the Cardinal. 'A deputation is about to wait upon the faithful,' said a pious collector to Sir Percy Nugent, a prominent but not wealthy Catholic baronet. 'Then I shall be one of the faithful

[1] This service is mainly taken from the Lamentations of Jeremias, and is most touching. The lights are extinguished as each Psalm ends, until at last only one is left burning. Then it was that Fr. Burke ascended the pulpit.

departed,' he replied, 'for on this evening I leave Dublin for my quiet retreat in Westmeath.' 'But even there you will not be suffered to rest in peace,' was the reply.

Assisted by Frs. Rooke, Prendergast, Buckler, and Cavanagh, Fr. Burke proceeded in 1868 to open a mission in Lincoln's-inn Fields Church, London.

The crowds (writes Fr. Prendergast) made it necessary for us to divide, and Fr. Albert Buckler and I went to St. John's,[1] Great Ormond Street, so as to have the overflow congregations from Lincoln's-inn Fields.

The latter had been known for nearly a century as the Sardinian Ambassador's chapel; but when the attitude of Victor Emmanuel became so menacing, Cardinal Wiseman declined to sanction the subsidy of 150*l.* a year which it had long received from Sardinia, and decided that henceforth it should be known as the Church of St. Anselm. That in Warwick Street, Golden Square, had previously been the chapel of the Bavarian Embassy, and during the penal times some Dominicans had liberty to enter these chapels unchallenged and to pass as the servants of the Ambassadors.

It was not very long before the opening of this mission that the Hon. and Rev. George Spencer, in his Redemptorist dress, had been mobbed through the streets. Our Dominicans lodged in Bloomsbury Square, and as, after each hard day's work, they walked home in their habits, sneers were made which hurt Fr. Burke more than if struck by stones. Happily they escaped, however, without a renewal of 'the O.P. riots' in a new sense. A passing glance through the railings of St. Giles's churchyard awakened old memories. There by the pale moonlight rose the tombstones of the three Dominicans—Fathers Atwood, Munson, and Bradley—who in perilous times

[1] It should perhaps be added that the church of St. John of Jerusalem is small, and, with an hospital, had been founded and endowed recently by a convert baronet, Sir George Bowyer. On July 18, 1867, a grand Requiem Mass for the Emperor Maximilian took place here, the Royal Families of England and of Italy being represented on the occasion.

had served the mission of Lincoln's-inn Fields. Fr. Peter Atwood and Fr. Albert Munson had both been condemned to the gibbet at Tyburn. Their successor, Fr. Patrick Bradley, got on better. In 1750 he was consecrated Bishop of Derry in Lincoln's-inn Fields chapel, but, resigning the mitre, he returned to that mission and served it until his death. There was thus a special fitness in Fr. Burke and his colleagues conducting the mission of 1868 on a spot memorable in the annals of their Order.

The Catholic journals of the day furnish wonderful accounts of it. The confessionals of Fr. Burke and his companions were crowded; countless conversions were made. Fr. Rooke looks back upon the mission as the hardest work in which he had ever been engaged. Fr. Burke, with his wonted humour, declared that it had the effect of wearing threadbare two pairs of the finest Blarney cloth garments which he had just bought. How he recuperated his exhausted energies and cheered his fellow-labourer is very characteristic. Some rare intervals of leisure were spent by him in the Zoological Gardens, watching with intent gaze and kindly interest the various animals. On his return he amused Fr. Rooke by a most perfect portrayal of the animated nature he had studied. In these mimicries he seemed to lose his own identity completely. Anon he would shift the scene and the subject; now he would treat his friend to views of classic statuary. One minute he was the dying gladiator; the next he was a Sphinx, drawing over his head the white hood of the habit; and sometimes he was a Burmese idol, erect and impassive, with legs crossed in a way which it would have puzzled an athlete to manage.

Fr. Paul Stapleton's recollections of his Novice Master conclude with some account of Burke's subsequent visit to the old ground near Woodchester. This was made during Fr. Stapleton's incumbency as parish priest of Stroud, and afterwards as prior of the monastery.

One day, while in solitude at my infant mission, I was startled by a ring, and the accents of a well-known voice. Who could it be? Nothing could delight me more—it was actually the great Fr. Tom Burke, for such he had become, come to see me and take me by surprise. My dear old mentor would put up, if I could only accommodate him anyhow, and so at once we were 'at home' as in the olden days.

Time had evidently knocked off some of the corners of our good and now illustrious father. The strong vein of humour was there, the ringing laugh, the queer and racy touch of brogue and blarney. It was surely Burke, as self-forgetful and wholly abandoned to God's gracious providence as ever, but yet toned down and gentler, and less 'brusque'—the saintly religious, and yet the ever natural, true, and warm-hearted Irishman—the best fellow-well-met in the world. So, even before bit or bite, he plunged into the middle of half-a-dozen stories, until I could scarcely contain myself with mixed pleasure and surprise. All at once a ring at the door strikes Father Thomas quite dumb, and he collapses. The stranger walks in, and, knowing the person myself, I simply entreated Burke to finish his story. It was his famous Mrs. Lynch and the Relief Board of Galway story, which he simply acted. By degrees the stranger began to laugh, and I too got merry; but so loud and almost hysterical became my latest visitor, that I feared he would tumble off his seat, and I strove to assist him. Still the story went on, but a pause allowed us to recover our senses; suddenly the mysterious visitor pulls out his watch, finds that he is very nearly missing his train, and hurries off. I accompany him to the door, leaving Fr. Tom Burke to puzzle over the apparition, and to wonder if perchance he had done wrong in doing what I told him. At the door, and away from Fr. Burke's hearing, Bishop C——, for it was he, seized me, and cried out, almost breathless, 'Who's that?' 'Why,' I reply, 'don't you know him? It's Fr. Burke.' 'Well,' he said, 'I thought so. I must come and meet him again; I have no time now.' Back to the parlour I returned and ditto occurred. Father Thomas rushes at me: 'Who's that?' I calmly reply, repressing a laugh, 'Why, don't you know? It's the bishop of the diocese.' Looking unutterable things, and thumping his breast, Fr. Tom at once exclaims, 'You don't mean it?—no, surely—that a bishop! How different from our solemn-looking prelates—no—come! That the celebrated Bishop of C—— too; no—surely.' 'Certainly, I am really not joking,' was my answer.

'Lord have mercy, then,' said Fr. Tom. 'Oh, forgive me! I never would have gone on like that if I had known. Oh why, my dear Paul, did you not tell me? The Lord be merciful to me!' (and another thump). 'I almost killed him outright! I had him on the floor!' Such is a pen-and-ink sketch of a scene simple and mirthful. But I have reason to know that it was the beginning of a most intimate and constant friendship between the prelate and the friar, that was often renewed and cultivated in aftertime in diverse parts and in the Eternal City.

While on his way *viâ* Bristol to Cork, on another occasion, Fr. Burke called at his favourite old monastery, and right glad I was again to receive my old novice master, who now found me in the responsible post of presiding over another generation of the youthful charges which in earlier days he so loved. At once he must, at my request, entertain them *suo modo*, and soon we formed a circle around the great man, and a series of characters, including the foreign preachers in English, were all paraded, and the old Lynch story was called for, and others; but a call for the monkey and Egyptian God being given, I refused to allow the first, as he said it was the most perfect take-off, and he did it to the life.[1]

Fr. Burke, in previously doing the monkey, had strengthened the resemblance by pulling down upon his forehead the small skull-cap of his Order. This, of course, the graver Fathers could not sanction. He once said that if the Darwinian theory were true, 'We are all apes, minus the tail, and nothing remains but for each one to mount his own particular branch of the gum-tree, and there crack his own nut.'

Very cordial relations subsisted between Fr. Burke and the Capuchin Friars. In June, 1868, he preached on the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of their new chapel in Church Street, Dublin, not far from the spot where Emmet sleeps.

At home or abroad Fr. Burke loved to speak of his mother's virtues and his father's genial ways. Of course he made a special visit to the old homestead at Galway.

[1] MS. Recollections of Very Rev. Paul Stapleton, O.P., Dominican Priory, Haverstock Hill, London, August 29, 1884.

A dinner was given at the College house here (observes its good Parochus) to celebrate Fr. Burke's return from Rome, where he had been assisting at the canonisation of the Japanese martyrs. Fr. Burke's stories began with the soup. More than once he stood up to imitate the salaams of the Eastern bishops. Endless anecdotes followed amid roars of laughter, while he himself remained imperturbable. During these parodies he would be eating, but some of the company were at last dismayed to find dessert come in before they themselves had begun to think seriously of dinner.

Fr. Burke brought home with him a pleasant story. Prince Napoleon visited Galway in his yacht; and a local swell, rejoicing in an historic Christian name, who plumed himself on his scholastic attainments, undertook to compose and to read, in the name of the town commissioners, an address in French to the Prince. He had pompously proceeded through the introductory sentence only, when his Highness, interposing, said, in excellent Saxon, 'Perhaps you would not mind addressing me in English, for, alas! gentlemen, I do not understand Irish.'

Fr. Burke having preached at an ecclesiastical function in Meath, a dinner wound up the doings of the day. Previous to entering the room he asked a lay friend 'what was the P.P.'s hobby.' 'I only know that *I* sold him a horse for 50*l*.,' was the reply. That evening the preacher rose to propose the health of the pastor, and all were astonished to find the speech full of horsey slang and turf phrases which seemed to show that he had studied *Bell's Life* as well as *belles lettres*. The pastor, at first puzzled, finally realised the joke.

He met at dinner another Meath priest, who was rather proud of his white horse. After a few preliminary canters the Dominican asked where he had bought his famous white charger. The other, suspecting that Burke was chaffing him, and in what he called 'a peppery way,' replied, 'My white horse was bought in Galway, where *all* the high-fliers and high-steppers come from.' 'I didn't mean to tread on the corns of the "white horse of the Peppers,"' responded Fr. Tom—alluding, of course, to Samuel Lover's play.

On May 14, 1869, when the remains of O'Connell were removed from their original resting-place to the crypt beneath the tower at Glasnevin, Fr. Burke pronounced the funeral panegyric. At his side stood 'Speranza,' Denis F. MacCarthy, and various Bishops; before him clustered the survivors of the old Catholic and Repeal Associations, the Municipalities of Ireland, and high officials who attained their positions by the Act of Emancipation. A sea of heads surged round him. The scene was striking and picturesque. Beneath a vast awning were all the preparations for the solemn rite of a Pontifical Requiem Mass. Sublime Gregorian music rose from four hundred voices; a grand procession formed and moved slowly through the cemetery; the robes of the clergy and the corporators intermingled their hues with the rich foliage of trees and flowers. Fifty thousand persons were there to honour the memory of O'Connell. Among them stood Lord Chancellor O'Hagan, Chief Justice Monahan, Lord Bellew, several baronets, and Chief Baron Pigot, who soon after passed from judging to be judged. O'Connell's youngest son Dan remarked, 'Poor father had many monster meetings, but this is the greatest of all.' Fr. Burke's oration occupied two hours. Here is an extract:

His glorious victory did honour even to those whom he vanquished. He honoured them by appealing to their sense of justice and of right; and in the Act of Catholic Emancipation England acknowledged the power of a people, not asking for mercy, but clamouring for the liberty of the soul—the blessing which was born with Christ, and which is the inheritance of the nations that embrace the Cross. Catholic emancipation was but the herald and the beginning of victories. He who was the Church's liberator and most true son was also the first of Ireland's statesmen and patriots. Our people remember well, as their future historian will faithfully record, the many trials borne for them, the many victories gained in their cause, the great life devoted to them by O'Connell. Lying, however, at the foot of the altar, as he is to-day, whilst the Church hallows his grave, with prayer and sacrifice, it is more especially as the Catholic Emancipator that we place a garland on his tomb. It

is as a child of the Church that we honour him and recall with tears our recollections of the aged man, revered, beloved, whom all the glory of the world's admiration and the nation's love had never lifted up in soul out of the holy atmosphere of Christian humility and simplicity. Obedience to the Church's laws, quick zeal for her honour and the dignity of her worship; a spirit of penance refining whilst it expiated, chastening whilst it ennobled, all that was natural in the man; constant and frequent use of the Church's holy sacraments, which shed the halo of grace round his venerated head,—these were the last grand lessons which he left to his people, and thus did the sun of his life set in the glory of Christian holiness.

Fr. Burke touchingly referred to the famine, which broke O'Connell's heart and led to his pilgrimage to Rome.

For Ireland he lived, for Ireland did he die.

On the shores of the Mediterranean the weary traveller lay down. At that last moment his profound knowledge of his country's history may have given him that prophetic glimpse of the future sometimes vouchsafed to great minds. He had led a mighty nation to the opening of 'the right way,' and directed her first and doubtful steps in the path of conciliation and justice to Ireland. Time, which ever works out the designs of God, has carried that nation forward in the glorious way. With firmer step, with undaunted soul, with high resolve of justice, peace, and conciliation, the work which was begun by Ireland's Liberator progresses in our day. Chains are being forged for our country, but they are chains of gold to bind up all discordant elements in the empire, so that all men shall live together as brothers in the land. If we cannot have the blessings of religious unity, so as 'to be all of one mind,' we shall have 'the next dearest blessing that heaven can give,' the peace that springs from perfect religious liberty and equality. All this do we owe to the man whose memory we recall to-day, to the principles he taught us which illustrate his life, and which, in the triumph of Catholic emancipation, pointed out to Irish people the true secret of their strength, the true way of progress, and the sure road to victory. The seed which his hand had sown it was not given to him to reap in its fulness. Catholic emancipation was but the first instalment of liberty. The edifice of religious freedom was to be crowned when the wise architect who had laid its foundations and built up the walls was in his grave. Let us hope that his dying eyes were cheered and the burden of his last

hour lightened by the sight of the perfect grandeur of his work; that like the prophet-lawgiver he beheld 'all the land'—that he saw it with his eyes, though he did not 'pass over to it;' and that it was given to him to 'salute from afar off' the brightness of the day which he was never to enjoy. The dream of his life is being realised to-day. He had ever sighed to be able to extend to his Protestant fellow-countrymen the hand of perfect friendship, which only exists where there is perfect equality, and to enter with them into the compact of the true peace which is founded in justice. Time, which buries in oblivion so many names and so many memories, will exalt him in his work. The day has already dawned and is ripening to its perfect noon when Irishmen of every creed will remember O'Connell, and celebrate him as the common friend and the greatest benefactor of their country. What man is there, even of those our age has called great, whose name, so long after his death, could summon so many loving hearts around his tomb? We to-day are the representatives not only of a nation but of a race. 'Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?' Where is the land that has not seen the face of our people and heard their voice? and wherever, even to the ends of the earth, an Irishman is found to-day, his spirit and his sympathy are here. The millions of America are with us; the Irish Catholic soldier on India's plains is present amongst us by the magic of his love; the Irish sailor, standing by the wheel this moment in far-off silent seas, where it is night, and the southern stars are shining, joins his prayer with ours, and recalls the glorious image and venerated name of O'Connell. He is gone, but his fame shall live for ever on the earth as a lover of God and his people. Adversaries, political and religious, he had many, and, like a tower of strength, 'which stood full square to all the winds that blew,' the Hercules of justice and of liberty stood up against them. Time, which touches all things with mellowing hand, has softened the recollection of past contests, and they who once looked upon him as a foe now only remember the glory of the fight and the mighty genius of him who stood forth the representative man of his race and the champion of his people. They acknowledge his greatness, and they join hands with us to weave the garland of his fame. But far other, higher, and holier are the feelings of Irish Catholics all the world over to-day. They recognise in the dust which we are assembled to honour the powerful arm which promoted them, the eloquent tongue which proclaimed their rights, the strong hand which, like that of the Maccabee of old, first struck off their chains and built up their holy

altars. Mingling the supplication of prayer and the gratitude of suffrage with their tears, they recall with love the memory of him who was a Joseph to Israel, their tower of strength, their buckler and their shield, who shed around their homes, altars, and graves the sacred light of religious liberty and the glory of unfettered worship. 'His praise is in the Church;' and this is the surest pledge of the immortality of his glory. 'A people's voice' may be 'the proof and echo of all human fame,' but the voice of the undying Church is the echo of 'everlasting glory;' and when those who surround his grave to-day shall have passed away, all future generations of Irishmen to the end of time will be reminded of his name and of his glory.

Fr. Burke's sister states that he arrived from another country only in time to deliver this great oration; and the moment it was over, instead of waiting to hear the elaborated thanks which were being prepared for him, he hurried off to the Mater Misericordiæ Hospital, in order to obey a letter which had been sent to Italy by a poor widow, expressing anxiety to see him before she died. He walked the wards of the hospital, eagerly scanning each bed as he passed, and was about to enter another room when he heard a feeble voice mutter his name. So emaciated was the poor sufferer that he had failed to recognise her face. 'Father,' she said, 'I waited for you.' He bent over her with touching fervour, and administered the consolations of religion. This good work he had barely finished when she sank to rest, wearing the sweetest expression of happiness.

Mr. Sherlock, who had been nearly made a monk by hearing Fr. Burke preach, continued like a true disciple to follow him.

Night after night (he writes) vast crowds came to St. Saviour's, bearing oppressive heat and well-nigh intolerable crushing, to listen to Fr. Burke's most masterly series of Lenten sermons. The lessons he taught sank deeply into many a heart, and abide there still. Lent after Lent, Advent after Advent, he continued to give powerful and instructive discourses, often preaching three times in the course of one day. How he bore up through this overpowering labour, and sustained the fatigues of constant travel while still ad-

hering to the rigid rule of his Order, can only be explained by his possession of a vitality given rarely to men.

One great feature in Fr. Tom (writes the Rev. Paul Stapleton, O.P.) was his fast friendships so singularly kept up and strangely cultivated; never by letter, for a more careless correspondent there did not live. Heaps of letters unread and unseen were waiting for him nearly everywhere. He would not and could not keep pace with that sort of thing, and so he tried to allow it to lapse. The ubiquitous friar was universally known and adored, and letters were bound to come. Now, some could not understand this, while others laughed it off. 'What! no answer from Fr. Tom, and it's two months since I wrote! I hear that So-and-So has had a line. I'll write again.' And so up went the pile, but no answer. And this was the experience of hundreds. But Fr. Tom was not oblivious. Seldom would he pass a friend by. In London I remember him taking me to Lady Redington's. There was quite a flutter of delight when he was announced. The young ladies especially seemed *être aux anges*, but to a chorus of 'Why did you not answer?' all round, came the meekest and sweetest of responses—'Why, my dears, would you have me so poorly express my affections, when 'tis only by seeing you I can do justice to them?'

It has been said that a letter timely written is a rivet to the chain of friendship, but a letter untimely delayed is as rust to the solder. Fr. Tom was a wonderful man to preserve —despite his epistolatory shortcomings—the troops of friends who, all over the world, cherished for him their love.

Many instances will be found, ere this narrative ends, to confirm Fr. Stapleton's account of his friend. There is, however, no rule without an exception. If letters did, at wide intervals, drop from Fr. Burke, they were as rare as the stars which fall from heaven. In 1869 a highly-gifted woman, Miss O'Connor Morris, now Mrs. Bishop, asked him a question touching the threatened disestablishment of the Irish Church. He thus replied, but it is remarkable that this letter, which she has preserved as a sacred relic, displays no signature, not even his initials:

My dear Miss Morris,—I was glad to hear from you, and I regret that I cannot give you much information on the subject to which you

allude. St. Thomas does not treat it expressly, for in his day the Catholic Church was established in all the civilised countries of Europe. But when the rights of Mendicant Orders were questioned, he in his answer to Gulielmus de Sancto Amore vindicates the rights of Dominicans, Franciscans, &c., to subsist upon the voluntary offerings of the faithful, and so far he indirectly touches on the great question of to-day. His arguments, however, do not help us much in our present difficulties, for he deals principally with poverty as a feature of evangelical perfection, and as a higher state requiring a special vocation as distinct from the vocation to the priesthood. He throughout takes for granted the endowments of the Church and the profession and protection of her on the part of the State. Now the dangers arising out of the voluntary system are twofold, and both of the gravest kind. The first affects doctrine, the second the sacraments. There is always danger that where the people have the support of their pastor in their own hands they may be inclined to dictate to him and impose their own views and opinions on him, whilst he, knowing that he depends on them for his bread, is tempted, nay, even forced, to adopt these religious views and opinions. This great evil is rife amongst Dissenters, whose preachers complain bitterly from time to time of their slavery. This, I imagine, will be the utter disruption of Protestantism in Ireland now that the Church is disendowed. The Catholic Church is saved from this danger of the voluntary system by her dogma. The objective reality (pardon the terms), truth, and consequent oneness of her dogmatic teaching saves the people from the tyranny of the priest, who cannot force his personal views or opinions on them, and saves the priest from all dictation or pressure of opinion on the part of the people, who must accept his preaching (it being the doctrine of the Church), and look upon him as their teacher and superior even whilst they furnish him his daily bread.

The disestablishment of the Irish Church had been long an object dear to the heart of the Rev. Sydney Smith, Macaulay, and many other Protestant thinkers. Cardinal Cullen attended at Marlborough Street on the occasion of a Triduum in thanksgiving for this great boon. Fr. Burke preached. The same absence of vulgar triumph which marked Fr. Burke's sermon is traceable in his lecture on Faith at Kingstown delivered in the subsequent July.

It was no more a victory for Catholics than for Protestants, rightly viewed. While they rejoiced in the strength of their holy religion, they should not forget that Protestants had given them the change, acknowledged the power of principle, and yielded the triumph to purity and faith. Catholics were now satisfied to stretch out the hand of frank fellowship to all their countrymen, so that good might be worked for Ireland. They wanted no ascendency. The word was hateful to Catholic ears. It stood not in their vocabulary; it lived not in their yearnings. They had, indeed, two words which they loved—Unity and Equality.

Lecturing on 'Ireland's Faith the Triumph of the Age,' on October 15, 1827, he told a trivial incident of this time:

Four years ago I met a poor fellow in Galway going along the road; he had his pipe in his mouth, and when he came up and saw the priest he took it out, and with a guilty expression of countenance put it behind his back. 'What's the best news, your reverence?' he said. 'Only this,' I replied, 'that they are making an Act of Parliament in England declaring that the Protestant Church is no longer to be the established religion in Ireland.' 'Do you mean to tell me,' said he, 'that the English Parliament made that law?' 'Yes, there's no doubt of it,' said I. 'Well,' said he, 'by the piper that played before Moses I never heard of them making any law for the Catholics of Ireland before, except coercion bills, pains and penalty bills, fines upon this and taxation upon that; and I don't know whether it was God or the divil taught them how to change.' And then the poor illiterate man made use of a remark which suggested to me the subject of this evening's lecture: 'Well, sir,' said he, 'it is a strange thing that they should have disestablished the Protestant Church. We are not making any row about it. O'Connell is dead; there is no arming now going on, no fighting in the country, and the boys are everywhere so quiet.'

Archbishop Cullen, now raised to the purple, continued to manifest towards Fr. Burke the same affection as of old, and during his few intervals from toil took pleasure in hearing him unfold his pranks and oddities. In their deep humility both were thoroughly akin.

Guileless as a child (said Fr. Burke) and thinking no evil, free and joyous in his intercourse with the humblest of his clergy, tender and merciful to the poor and penitent, hoping all good things even

for the fallen, nor breaking the bruised reed, nor extinguishing the smoking flax, preaching with the strength and pathos of learning, authority, and the unction of sanctity combined; with unadorned eloquence, yet with great clearness and power instructing his people 'in season and out of season,' wearing the purple not so much with stateliness as with a wonderful dignity of repose; the head of his nation, the guardian of the flock, the delight of his clergy—O Father, what have we not lost in thee whose face we shall see no more!

This was part of the funeral sermon delivered in 1878.

The only time I ever saw the Cardinal laugh heartily (observes Dr. Brady) was at the dinner in celebration of St. Dominic's Day, when Fr. Burke mimicked his Eminence to the life; but I thought he spoiled the effect by following it up with his personation of the Italian *lazzaroni*.

One evening at the palace, after Fr. Burke had sung 'The Lower Castle Yard,' Cardinal Cullen asked what sort of a place was Cook Street, where lived the hero of the song. This led to a story, and it may be observed parenthetically that Fr. Tom's power in this line was shown in producing comicality out of the most solemn and depressing subjects. The success of this story led to its repetition on subsequent occasions. It is said that every Bishop laughed at it except Dr. Coffin.

One morning, going into Tallaght, I was met by a poor woman named Crosbie, swaying herself from side to side apparently in great grief. She burst out at once. 'Oh, Father Tom! he's gone at last! he's gone, oh dear!'

'Well, well, Molly,' I replied; 'you know he has been given over for some time past by the doctors, and you said you would be content if he was well prepared to go; he *was* well prepared, and you ought to be more resigned.'

'Oh,' said she, petulantly, 'that is not what's troubling me; but he's been so long sick that every penny is gone, and now he'll have to be buried by the parish.'

Recognising the universal desire of the poorer classes to give, at any cost of suffering to themselves, a good funeral to their dead, I said, 'Well, now, Molly, I will get you a pound out of the poor-box; you can go up to Dublin and buy a coffin, and I will see that he is not buried by the parish.'

She dropped on her knees, and, with upraised hands, said, 'Oh,

Father Tom, jewel, may every hair on your head turn to a mowld candle to light you to glory!'

The poor woman walked to Dublin, and at once proceeded to Cook Street. This is a narrow street, devoted almost solely to the manufacture of coffins. Big hulks of coffins are to be seen leaning their shoulders against door-sills, others stick their heads into the street as if looking out for customers, and inside are piles of every size. Little coffin-lids may be seen holding up windows, and a continued rat-tat-tat resounds all day from the different shops, where men are engaged in putting on the tin ornaments that adorn the coffins of the poor.

When Molly came to the head of the street, and saw all the preparations for burial, her tears welled up, but before she had time to cry, the owner of one of the establishments, always on the look-out for such cases, came up and said, 'So your poor man is gone at last. Ah, God be with him; he was the dacent fellow.'

'Oh, then you knew my poor husband?'

'Yes, indeed—(a lie, by the way)—many's the time we went to Bully's Acre[1] together, and he would stand his pint as well as any man.' By degrees he drew over towards his shop, and when at it, said, 'I suppose it's a coffin you'll be wantin', ma'am.' She nodded sadly. 'No doubt you'd like plenty of ornaments. How would this one do?' pointing to a big coffin standing inside the door. 'You know it was some time since I saw him, and he may have grown stout.'

Mrs. Crosbie thought it would about do, and put her hand over to feel its thickness. He immediately launched out into praise of his work. 'That's a fine article, ma'am; it's made out of the best boards we get from Archangel.'

'From the Archangel? Oh, the Lord be good to us; do they supply you with boards?'

'Oh yes; we keep nothing but the very best. Do you know Mr. Fox that lives in Francis Street? Well, he's a very snug ould bachelor; only last week he got sick, and the doctors gave him up. He sent for his housekeeper. "Mrs. Mooney," said he, "they tell me I'm going to die." "Oh, don't talk that way, sir," said she. "You'll dance at all their wakes yet." "Oh, don't interrupt me," said he, cross-like. "I want you to make me a promise," said he. "Any-

[1] Bully's Acre—formerly the site of the Monastery of the Knights of St. John—had become a pauper burial-ground near Dublin, but is remarkable for possessing the historic tomb of Donagh, son of King Brian Boroihme, who fell at Clontarf A.D. 014.

thing in raison, sir," said she. "Well, then," said he, "whenever I am taken I want you to go over to Mick Nowlan's in Cook Street and order my coffin." "I will, sir," said she. "Then I'll die aisy," said he, "for I know I'll get the dacent article."'

Just then Molly pointed out a knot-hole. 'Oh,' says Nowlan, 'I'll fix that at once.' Then calling up the little crooked stairs, he roared out, 'Jim, bring me down a handful of angels.' These are block tin ornaments with which the coffins of the poor are adorned. When the angels were brought he took a hammer and tacked one over the knot-hole, and one on the opposite side for uniformity. 'Now,' he exclaimed, bestowing on it a benign smile of admiration; 'but in any case, maybe Crosbie wouldn't object to have a little hole to escape to heaven at the sound of the last trumpet—mine is everlasting work and screwed down as tight as tuppence.' The widow expressed herself satisfied, and then put the crucial question as to price. Nowlan, in his most insinuating tones, replied, 'The price of the article is a pound, but on account of the man that's gone, and your desolate condition, I'll give it to you for seventeen and six.' 'Seventeen and six for that! I'll give you ten and sixpence and not a farden more.' Here Nowlan's late suavity of manner left him, and with a cynical scowl he said, 'Go on out of that, you ould strap; ten and six for a coffin like that? It's a coffin made of orange boxes or of cholera-boords you want, and not the best article in the street. Go over there to Foley's, and get something to suit your pocket. The last corpse he coffined was shivering with the cowld before it left the street. *He*'ll give you one made of cholera-boords, so he will, with your ten and six, and before your man is twenty-four hours under the sod, the sack-em-ups[1] will have him, so they will, with your ten and six. Yes, and they'll take out his liver and lights, and preserve them in spirits in Steeven's Hospital—thanks to your ten and six. Aye, and they'll sell his shin-bones to Arnott to make handles for parasols—so they will—with your ten and six. Worse nor that, they'll take out his teeth and sell them to Hudson, the dentist, and he'll put them in the mouth of some vile ould renegade to assist him in aitin' meat on Friday, and where, at last, they'll be gnashing for all eternity—so much for your ten and six.' Mrs. Crosbie, who was writhing in agony during the first part of the philippic, could not withstand the last fearful threat; she paid the sum demanded, and went off with her dead bargain.

[1] Men who effected premature resurrections for anatomical purposes were called 'sack-em-ups.'

CHAPTER X.

THE VATICAN COUNCIL.

FR. BURKE was now selected by the Bishop of Dromore to accompany him to the Vatican Council as his theologian. It was the first General Council held for three hundred years, and great interest grew round its solemn sittings. After the new dogma had been defined, Fr. Burke expressed some views which merit preservation.

How completely the great assembly of Trent had done its work is matter of history (observes our Dominican). But every age brings its own dangers and difficulties in the Church of God. A spirit of blank infidelity had sprung up, resulting in the hideous atheism which has left its awful mark on our own days. The rage is now turned from the invisible to the visible head of the Church. Who is this man who dares to thrust dogmatic definitions upon us and speak the language of despised faith to the nineteenth century? Is it for this that the human intellect shook off the yoke of authority three hundred years ago?—for this that science has attained to the white light of an almost perfect knowledge? Are we to become as little children again, and sit down to be taught by an old man, the head of a worn-out Church, and the vicar of an exploded God? Let us pull this aged pretender from his throne, let us cast him forth, unknown as Peter was of old amongst the ignoble crowd of the followers of Christ. Thus the pride and passion of the world arose against the head of the Church, and heresy, infidelity, and revolution joined hands to abolish him. They taught, and rightly, that if they could but destroy the head, the mystical body of Christ would soon be a corpse at their feet; if they could but strike the shepherd, the sheep would be dispersed. Then the great crime of the nineteenth century was publicly perpetrated. Truth, justice, honour, plighted oath, necessity, history, were alike trampled upon; and in the spoliation

of the Sovereign Pontiff a new principle of government, public action, and law was announced and accepted.

But was the Church to stand idly by whilst her head—Peter's successor and Christ's vicar—was thus dishonoured?—the Church, which from the beginning acknowledged him as the centre and source of her authority, the one wholly infallible witness and exponent of her faith and guardian of her law—which never called a council nor promulgated a decree, nor expressed a dogma of her faith but at his calling and with his sanction. The hour predestined in the Divine decrees is come, when the Catholic Church must proclaim authoritatively to the world all that she had ever taught and believed of Peter and his successors. Before sacrilegious hands can touch his temporal crown—the only thing within their reach—whilst the lingering glories of Rome, Catholic and Papal, yet surround him; the Church hastens to assemble and, with united voice and faith, proclaims Peter's successor the Pope of Rome to be, in virtue of Christ's special prayer, and by the interposition of the Holy Ghost, preserved from all possibility of error in his teaching as Head of the Church. This great declaration of faith was made in the form of a dogmatic utterance, that expressed clearly and distinctly the mind of the Church—the mind of God the Holy Ghost, her guide. Such an expression of the Church's faith is as true, as solemn, as binding, as the revealed word itself, for it is as much the expression of the mind of God.[1]

People were fond of comparing the grandeur and importance of the Vatican Council with that of Trent; but Trent was an obscure town in the Tyrol, and merely presided over by legates, while the Œcumenical Council of 1869 was held under the personal auspices of the Pope, and in the centre of unity, Rome. Eight hundred and three Fathers took their seats, being one hundred and thirty-five more than the united attendance at the three councils of Nice, Constantinople, and Ephesus. This solemn senate of the Vatican opened on December 8, 1869, with a pomp of ceremonial not likely to be soon forgotten by those whose privilege it was to witness it.

The prelates, vested in white copes and mitres, assembled (Canon

[1] In Marlborough Street Cathedral, Dublin, Nov. 27, 1878.

Pope writes), and two and two moved in solemn procession down the Scala Regia, through the vestibule, into the nave of St. Peter's. The entire route was fringed by a triple line of secular priests and members of the religious orders in their various costumes, and by the Palatine Guard, the Zouaves, the Antibes Legion, and other regiments in brilliant uniforms, which seemed like a great border of flowers dyed in every variety of tint. After the procession had occupied an hour in its transit, his Holiness passed into the basilica, amidst the hum of thousands and the sheen of naked swords flickering as they moved over the officers' heads and were lowered to the pavement; amid the crash of musket-butts as the military knelt and presented arms; amidst the thrilling strains of martial music, booming bells, and thundering volleys of artillery discharged from the Aventine mount and the Castle of St. Angelo.

Bishops bronzed and black sat *vis à vis* to the pallid Archbishop of Westminster and to the polished prelates of La Belle France. Bishops bent with age, others erect as the Cross, entered into the work before them. Prominent among the former was the venerable Bishop of Dromore, by whom it was correctly judged that Fr. Burke, though acting nominally as his theologian, would, from his knowledge of all things Roman, prove an invaluable cicerone and *socius*. His Lordship occupied apartments at San Clemente, as also Fr. Burke's great friend, Dr. Moriarty, Bishop of Kerry; Archbishop Errington, coadjutor to the late Cardinal Wiseman in Westminster; and Dr. O'Connell, Bishop of Grass Valley, San Francisco, California. These prelates were of opinion that to define the Pope's infallibility would prove inexpedient. They were familiarly known as 'Inopportunists,' and San Clemente was facetiously styled by Cardinal Cullen's adherents as Port Royal—the stronghold of the Jansenists in days of yore. But there were some ecclesiastics at San Clemente not persistently Inopportunists, amongst whom may be specially mentioned Dean Neville, the theologian of Dr. Moriarty. Here a fast friendship was fostered between Dr. Neville and Fr. Burke, which

continued uninterrupted to the end. We may add that Fr. Burke was an Inopportunist; so was Archbishop MacHale, who spoke twice against the proposed definition. Both were opposed to it, not on doctrinal but on political grounds, and lest it should imperil Catholic unity. But by far the most strongly-developed Inopportunist was David Moriarty, Bishop of Kerry. Part of their hostility was due to the fact that until the Council met, no intimation was made of any intention to define the infallibility.

The procession of near eight hundred bishops, mitred and coped, as they emerged from St. Peter's two by two, gracefully bowing to each other while they conversed, was a spectacle to be remembered. Some of the Eastern prelates wore crowns. Even physically they presented a fine specimen of manhood. A Protestant who watched them asked, 'Have these men been selected for their appearance?'

The Rev. James Daniel contributed to the *Freeman's Journal* at this period some gossiping letters from Rome. Under date December 13, 1869, he writes:—

Your distinguished fellow-countryman, Father Thomas Burke, is delivering on the Sundays of Advent a series of sermons for the instruction of the English-speaking portion of the residents and strangers at Rome. The attendance to-day was particularly large, and comprised several foreign bishops and priests, who, I suspect, understood very little of what the eloquent Divine was saying. He had, however, the happiness of seeing amongst his audience several prelates of his own old country, amongst them being the Archbishop of Tuam, who, after his five-and-forty years of unceasing toil in the Episcopacy, looks the very perfection of health and vigour; Dr. Nulty, Bishop of Meath; Dr. Donnelly, Bishop of Clogher; Dr. Derry, Bishop of Clonfert; Dr. McEvilly, Bishop of Galway; Dr. Leahy, Bishop of Dromore, &c. Dr. Kenrick, Archbishop of St. Louis; Dr. Grimley (Cape of Good Hope); Dr. Feehan, Bishop of Nashville, U.S., and the Rev. Maziere Brady, the well-known Protestant ecclesiastical historian, formed a part of the congregation.

A subsequent despatch announces 'to those who take an

interest in Fr. Burke, and their name is legion,' that, owing to illness, these attractive sermons had been temporarily interrupted. Fr. Daniel notes as remarkable that foreign divines, who could ill understand what he said, thronged to hear Fr. Burke. But so expressive was his action, that deaf mutes were as much charmed as though they heard his words; and it will be seen that, for clerical critics, he once successfully preached in pantomime. Fr. Burke's sermons were delivered in the Church of Santa Maria del Popolo, famous for its works of art, including the windows of Peter and Claude, two great Dominicans of Limoges, whom Leo X. summoned to paint the glass of the Vatican. Fr. Burke found a formidable rival in Dr. Manning this year. His Grace preached the St. Patrick's Day sermon at St. Isidore's, and the 'Freeman' does not fail to announce that an edified listener appeared in the person of Fr. Burke.

As time advanced, the discussion in the Vatican Council had become more animated. But on the whole progress was so slow that, if it had not been for Father Thomas, time would have dragged. The Right Rev. Mgr. Sheehan has been kind enough to commit to writing for our use some reminiscences of a highly laughable incident:

One would imagine that the gathering together of the prelates of the Universal Church to debate and decide questions of the highest importance could hardly have given an opportunity to the most enthusiastic promoter of fun to ply his calling; and yet so keen was Father Tom's perception of the ridiculous, and so insatiable his thirst for drollery, that even in the solemn time of an Œcumenical Council it would manifest itself. A good deal of hospitality was shown to the prelates by the upper classes resident in Rome. Amongst the English Catholics, Mr. Bodenham was distinguished for the frequency and brilliancy of his entertainments. Amongst his guests were naturally found the English-speaking bishops, but he did not by any means limit his invitations to those who spoke his mother tongue.

He had frequently at his house the Oriental prelates as well.

With a kindness worthy of all praise, he had an apartment arranged for their reception, as far as possible, after the fashion of their Eastern clime. There was a divan well-cushioned, and an abundant supply of coffee, and it may be of sherbet, and no end of the most delicately flavoured tobacco. The prelates sat cross-legged on the luxurious cushions, and sipped their coffee in solemn silence, as clouds of smoke went up towards the gilded ceiling.

Towards the end of one evening, Mr. Bodenham proposed to his English, Irish, and American friends that they should pay a visit to the Orientals, who were so tranquilly enjoying themselves. As they moved along and bowed their respectful greetings, the eyes of a Munster Bishop, from an historic Irish city, became at once rivetted upon a figure, not clothed in the full Oriental costume of his fellows, but smoking and sipping coffee as well as the best of them, and, like all his companions, sitting crosslegged and holding his tongue most industriously. 'Why, Father Tom,' exclaimed Dr. Butler, 'is that you? What in the world brought you here?' 'Well! my Lord,' said the Dominican, I heard there was plenty of coffee and tobacco to be had here, and I saw no reason why a Western should leave all those good things to the Orientals; and I wanted to prove, moreover, that there were wise men in the West as well as in the East.'[1]

Fr. Burke, when preaching on St. Patrick, said: 'The Chinese are perhaps the oldest civilised people in the world—Apostles have preached to them, and at their hands some of the greatest saints have won the martyr's crown. The Chinese nation up to this has persistently refused to accept the faith.' Be this as it may, two Chinese bishops attended

[1] Fr. Burke told this story himself with some extra details. A door covered with baize attracted his notice on various occasions, and an exquisite aroma of tobacco escaped whenever it opened. Anxious to penetrate the arcana within he put on a bold face. Seeing some Oriental garments hanging near the door, he was tempted by old dramatic instincts to throw one carelessly over his shoulder. Entering the symposium, he found himself in presence of men who seemed a cross between the Grand Cham of Tartary and the Nizam of Hyderabad, and all of whom puffed from hookahs heavenly Havannah. Grand salaams were made. Finding that the place had been allotted to Eastern patriarchs and prelates, he at first felt somewhat shy, but his love of a good joke carried him through. Hailed as one of themselves, he passed a day or two within that privileged circle. He told Dr. Power, V.G., that one Irish prelate with whom he conversed did not recognise him, though the acuteness of the Bishop of Limerick at last detected the impersonation.

the Vatican Council, and their names will be recognised in the list of those who swelled the grand procession to St. Peter's.

In one of his lectures he said: 'The Chinaman has no bridge to his nose, and his eyes turn inwards as if both were occupied watching where the bridge ought to be.' This shows how diligently Fr. Burke had studied the genus, and in casually accosting the Chinese bishops he suitably arranged his face. He heard the Bishop of Nankin say to the other in Chinese, 'It certainly sounds like our language, but we cannot discuss here the question he raises.'

There was no 'part' in his *répertoire* that Fr. Burke practised more than that of the Chinaman. On another occasion he asked a French missioner from China if he spoke its tongue; and on receiving a prompt affirmative, proceeded to overpower him with a torrent of celestial eloquence. The missioner, with some warmth, said that he did not understand such Chinese. 'Oh, probably because mine is Court Chinese,' replied Fr. Tom.

Cavillers might say that this sort of thing tended to break down respect, and solemn men may shake their heads. The venerable Bishop of Cork but expresses the view held of Fr. Burke by all the English-speaking prelates whom he knew in Rome.

None (writes his Lordship) could more ardently desire to have the highest tribute of respect paid to one whose varied and brilliant talents commanded the admiration of all who had any opportunity of estimating his rare gifts. It was reserved to those only who had the happiness of close intimacy to discover fully the hidden virtues of the man, his piety, humility, charity, and holiness as a true religious

Mgr. Sheehan, Vicar-General of Cork, declares that

Father Burke was the readiest wit, and his charming power of song was most remarkable. His was the largest repertory of wondrous anecdotes, which he told with the utmost point and humour. The fact of his being a brilliant social companion would subtract nothing from our estimate of him as a priest. It was not because a man was a great theologian and preacher that he

should hang down his head and say nothing to enliven his time and amuse his companions. That was not Fr. Burke's way. His whole object was to make himself agreeable, and he invariably succeeded.

The social circle was Burke's playground, and no boy could enjoy himself more when once he entered it. 'When we spoke together on serious topics' (writes Mr. Lane), 'nothing struck me more than the breadth of his intellect.'

And then his conversation with Bishop Moriarty. How often he referred to that great privilege afterwards. Their acquaintance, dating from 1857, when the young Dominican personated an Italian preacher, had now ripened into a generous friendship. Let us hear from Fr. Burke those points in the bishop which so favourably impressed him. These he described on October 7, 1877:

Nature had invested him with great strength and dignity of character, a courage that never knew fear, gentleness, and natural amiability, which education and intercourse with the refined had matured to the charm of a perfect urbanity, and with a heart most generous and loving. Intellectual and spiritual graces followed. Every faculty was trained and enlarged with varied learning. The instincts of a student were his to the last. Priest and bishop, he was still a hard reading man. History, especially that of the Church, was an open volume in his memory. The lighter forms of literature were not neglected, and his pure eloquence proved not only the light of his mind, but also that he had copiously drunk of 'the well of English' undefiled. The classical knowledge of ancient languages, acquired in boyhood, was dear to him as a man, and often he returned to them, renewing his youth and refreshing his wearied spirit. But the gifts of nature, though largely bestowed, the endowments of intellect, though carefully cultivated, were as nothing compared with the higher spiritual graces which made him beloved of God and man. He was a man of prayer. Rising before the sun, he gave the first four hours of the day to immediate and undisturbed intercourse with God.

A distinguished prelate who lived under the same roof

with Fr. Burke at this time writes from the far fields of California:

He was a many-sided man, and we may truly say of Fr. Burke what Brougham, I think, said of Cæsar, 'One might be truly great without being as great as Cæsar.' I saw only the sunny, that is the funny, side of Fr. Burke during my sojourn in San Clemente. His pious practices and exercises he studiously concealed from me. It was only during his hour of relaxation, for the bow can't be always bent, that I was favoured with his conversation. He struck me from first to last as another St. Philip Neri, the Apostle of Rome, especially when preaching to admiring thousands in the Eternal City! With what fruit it is not for me to tell. But numerous converts live to attest the value of his sermons. Gifted as he was, there wasn't a streak or fibre of pride in him. So small was he in his own estimation, that I heard him when proceeding to the pulpit request a few 'Hail Marys' from the crowd that lined his way, 'that I may not make a fool of myself!' He realised the maxim inculcated by the author of the 'Imitation of Christ'—viz. 'If you wish to make true progress in Christian perfection, love to be reputed as nothing in this world.' It was with this view he indulged in such innocent jokes—most generally at his own expense. But never did he wound the feelings of another. Lady Clanricarde—whose family name is Burke—approached him when surrounded by an admiring throng, and claimed kindred with him. But he assured her Ladyship with an emphasised brogue that the son of Wat Burke the baker couldn't aspire to such a privilege. So little did Fr. Burke think of worldly honours. I have seen him writhing in pain, and when condoling with him he said, 'I deserve to suffer the torments of hell.' His schoolmates assured me that in his wildest sallies they never saw anything which could possibly disedify.[1]

Such replies as those made to Lady Clanricarde were, no doubt, the fruit of previous thought and formed part of his discipline in creating a thorough humbleness of spirit. In a sermon preached in Kilconnell in November, 1878, he said:

We all know that St. Joseph was the keeper of his Lord, but

[1] Letter of the Right Rev. Dr. Eugene O'Connell, Bishop of Grass Valley, California, to the Author, October 18, 1883.

before men he was the father, for the Son did him honour. If anyone would have asked the carpenter's son, Jesus Christ, who was his father? He would have answered, 'My father is Joseph, the poor carpenter at Nazareth.'

From the time of Henry II. the Burkes were regarded as Lords of Connaught, but Fr. Tom did not encourage any attempt to engraft him on the great family tree. At a formal dinner party the stereotyped question was put to him across the table by a lady who liked blue blood. 'I do not know much of the Burkes of Glinsk, myself,' he said, 'but I remember my mother served them with bread.' It was in the same spirit that he replied to a lady, who, speaking rapturously of his voice, asked him what means he had used to bring it to such beauty, tone, and power. 'Ah, 'tis easy to account for it. My father was an oysterman, and oysters are the best things in the world for the voice.' Another lady, on being presented to him after one of his sermons, said, 'I am charmed with your discourse more than I can express, and I am a wee bit anxious to know if you are equally *au fait* in any other accomplishment?' 'Well, I'm not a bad hand at making pancakes, ma'am,' was his reply.

The Bishop of Clogher is loud in his praise of the sermons he heard Fr. Burke preach in the church of Santa Maria during the Vatican Council. Perfectly original, these often became more like historic lectures. His audience frequently embraced nearly every Catholic bishop in the world. Archbishop MacHale and Bishop Moriarty declared after having heard one of these sermons that their hearts were too full to express all they felt.

A great prince of the Church who saw him in more thoughtful and ascetic mood than some other prelates speaks of Burke's voice as one of the 'most eloquent that I have ever heard—a priest whom I truly loved.' Cardinal Manning adds:

I had known Fr. Burke long and well. Our friendship began at

Rome, and through its streets we walked together, and there was a bond of affection between us—mutual knowledge and confidence—which was never relaxed, but grew more close and intimate even to the end. And now we shall no more hear that eloquent voice, eloquent because so simple, for in all he spoke for God ; he remembered God and forgot himself ; it was the eloquence not of study nor self-manifestation, but of the great soul filled with God and speaking for God. The whole man spoke, and yet in the pathos, and beauty, and light of what he spoke we never remembered the speaker. He concealed himself, as it were, and therefore he touched and moved and swayed the hearts of those who heard him. That eloquent voice is silent to us, but it is not silent in the eternal world, for it is always to be going up in the midst of that multitude which no man can number before the eternal throne.

Theologians of every clime were unanimous in their verdict. Mgr. Seton, of New York, declared that he had never listened to a speaker who so completely captivated his audience ; and when it was announced that the great Dominican was coming to the States, Dr. Seton expressed a fear that the people would hardly realise the treat in store for them. Soon after Fr. Burke's retirement from Rome the Lenten sermons which had been so long an attraction, thanks to Cardinals Wiseman and Manning and himself, came to an end.

Speaking of the dangers attendant on the adulation that pursued Fr. Burke, Fr. Clarke writes :

He had a most profound sense of the vanity and emptiness of all worldly esteem and honour. God and the Church were his one thought. He had praise and adulation enough to ruin any man, but it never seemed to make any impression upon Fr. Burke. It somehow slipped past him unnoticed. It was the work God had given him to do which absorbed his thoughts. He had attained that high level of the religious life where self-consciousness, or rather a consciousness of self, disappears altogether. It was only when some attempt more obvious than usual to glorify him at the expense of truth attracted his notice and roused his ire, that he paid any attention to such things.

But touch his sense of the ludicrous and at once his eyes sparkled.

Aubrey de Vere beheld him at a greater distance than most of the men whose impressions we have given.

I saw him frequently at Rome (he writes). I was much struck by him, though unfortunately I did not hear him preach. He seemed to me a noble specimen of the priest, and of the Irish priest—abounding in genius and in geniality; strong, simple, manly, at once one of 'Nature's gentlemen,' and a true son of the Church; empty of self, and full of the apostolic spirit. He and my dear friend Dr. Moriarty, Bishop of Kerry, were doubtless among the highest and purest of that vast assemblage of Christian priests gathered that year around the throne of Peter.

The fact is incidentally mentioned by Fr. Ralph, a Dominican officiating in America, that an effort was made during the Vatican Council to persuade Fr. Burke to accept the Coadjutor Archbishopric of San Francisco, but nothing could tempt him to relinquish the habit of a poor preaching friar—not even the gold of California. The Archbishop, Dr. J. Sadoc Alemany, had worn the mitre since 1850, and as the priests of the diocese were nearly all Irishmen, the proposal seemed pleasanter than transplantation to Trinidad.[1] This is not the only case in which Fr. Burke preferred a cell to a palace. Quoting from à Kempis (Book I. c. xvii.) he said, 'Thou camest hither to serve, not to rule.'

In order to put a quietus upon such efforts, Fr. Burke continued to make his deportment somewhat unepiscopal. The following comes from a late Vice-Rector of the Irish College at Rome:—Fr. Tom having visited a zoological collection, a very amusing scene took place at the monkey house. The opportunity of mimicking those caricatures of humanity was too tempting to lose. Fr. Burke posed before the animals, and made the most hideous faces and gestures. The monkeys got angry, screamed, pulled at the bars of their cage, and finally clawed each other. At last the keeper begged Fr. Burke to bring the sensational scene to a close, which of

[1] Full details will be found in vol. ii. (page 118), of the attempt made to induce Fr. Tom to accept Episcopal dignity in Trinidad.

course he at once did, much to the disappointment of a school who were enjoying a holiday.

'Sleep,' says St. Ambrose, 'is to be less indulged in than Nature demands. Disturb it with groans.' (Paraen. ad Penit., p. 272.)[1] It was some time previous that Fr. Burke for less ascetic reasons serenaded, *à la* Don Pasquale, and seeming to accompany himself on the guitar, Father Joseph Mullooly after he had retired for the night. He began—

'Oh, Fr. Mullooly,
Tum, tum, &c.'

and went on seeking the most unlooked-for rhymes. The incident would hardly be noticed here but to correct a frequently told story that the performance took place at Sligo under the windows of Bishop Gillooly. Fr. Tom varied the programme by the mewing of a cat, which he pursued through every variation of key from the feline serenade to its note of defiance in battle. Next day he learned with remorse that he had kept awake an Irish bishop for whom he bore the most affectionate consideration. And this was the man of whom Fr. Kane, S.J., has said that 'so great was the power of his words on the human heart that strong men as they listened would weep aloud.'

On another occasion he produced an operatic study by mewing, and showed that after all there was little difference between cat and Catalani. He was amused by a joke that a cat was a great *prima donna*, and that if boot-jacks were bouquets her nine lives would be strewn with roses. It will be seen that when almost on his deathbed he compared himself to a dying cat still able to mew.

The Franciscans of St. Isidore's make St. Patrick's Day rather than that of St. Francis their feast day, because Rome

[1] This is a passage to which Fr. Mullooly gave prominence in his book on the subterranean treasures of San Clemente. In many of Fr. Tom's jokes a deeper meaning is found to lurk than might at first sight appear.

is crowded with English visitors in March and would be deserted in October. Fr. Burke was always the grand attraction put forward on those occasions He told among other stories how, after he had arrived as Prior of San Clemente, he ordered a kid to be roasted for dinner. A little Italian lay-brother felt himself privileged to urge the cook to boil it instead. The Prior, chancing to hear of this countermand, entered the kitchen, and, armed with all the weight of his great authority, solemnly ordered the Italian to be put into the oven. The simple man, thinking that his Prior was serious, is said to have cried for mercy.

Fr. Burke also mentioned that one day at San Clemente, observing Fr. Mullooly slowly approaching along a corridor, he made some unearthly vocal noises outside the door of a certain grave Bishop, and then rapidly withdrew. The Bishop opened his door wide just as Mullooly reached it, and with a puzzled expression peered over his spectacles at the man whom he unjustly regarded as the source from whence the disturbance came.

Amongst the brightest sallies of fun in the midst of laughter inextinguishable (writes a Jesuit Father) he was serious in an instant if he were consulted by those who needed his advice in matters spiritual or temporal. Every trace of the boisterous merriment was gone, and the quiet earnest tone of heartfelt sympathy was always ready to bind up the broken heart and pour balm into the wounded soul. Those who saw him in his lighter moods could scarcely believe how grave and wise was his spiritual counsel; how he spoke as one whom God had commissioned to convey His Divine message to the troubled soul.

Mass he celebrated daily. To quote the words of Fr. Burke himself:

You will say, perhaps, 'Was not the sacrifice of Calvary sufficient?' Perfectly sufficient, a perfect atonement, a complete sacrifice; so that if any man deemed other sacrifice necessary besides that of Calvary the thought would be blasphemy and the expression of it heresy, involving the censures of the Church. But yet a sacrifice may be all-

sufficient and yet it may be continued through the love of Him who first made it. The same sacrifice which took place in a revolting manner on Calvary takes place mystically on this altar; the same body is here and the same blood. Who therefore will dare to say that the Catholic Church had set up any other sacrifice, or has denied the all-sufficiency of the sacrifice of our divine Lord on Calvary?'[1]

But he held that the altar of the Church was even greater than Calvary. On the former He sheds His blood and passes not away as he did on Golgotha.

When the bishops returned to San Clemente jaded after the discussions and deliberations of the day, it was impossible to foresee what fun Fr. Burke might not have in store to rouse them. The burlesque opera between him and Monsabré was now reproduced with improved effects. Bishop Moriarty, who had not attended the Centenary in 1867, was specially delighted by its comic business. But other prelates were present, including a very solemn one, Dr. Leahy, Bishop of Dromore. The genial Bishop of Cork, who saw much of Burke at other times, tells us that he would not only sing the most comic of songs, but seem to give an accompaniment of various instruments in chorus, and perform next minute the still more difficult feat of presenting one of Moore's best-known melodies without singing a word of it. This was the 'Last Rose of Summer,' when by facial expression and general pantomime he told its tale with touching fidelity. He also translated the same lyric into fine Italian. But it was when portraying an old maid as the last rose of summer left blooming alone that he rose to highest dramatic strength, and there is now before us a veritable photograph of Fr. Burke taken in the character of the forsaken spinster. Previous to sitting he placed upon his head that appendage known to aged ladies as a front. Where he picked it up no one could tell. Limp corkscrew

[1] 'The Altar and the Sacrifice,' Fermoy, August 17, 1878.

ringlets hung on either side of his strangely disguised face; and a copy of the photograph is enclosed in the following note addressed to his niece in Galway:

My dear Katty,—You are blessed with a scatter-brain uncle. I forgot to inclose you the photograph. Take care of it: 'a thing of beauty is a joy for ever.' Glad to hear that papa and mamma are better. Love to them and Margaret.

Ever thine,

T. BURKE, O.P.

One evening the solemn Bishop of Dromore deprecated his exuberance of spirits as unworthy of the priestly dignity. 'If it were not for this blemish,' he said, 'there is no distinction to which your talents would not entitle you.' He replied, 'I often heard *you* express regret that you had ever been made a bishop. If your Lordship had followed my example and had a little more fun in you, that burthen would never have been laid upon you.' In point of fact his love of fun failed to harm him in the estimation of wise heads. They felt with Addison, 'One should take care not to grow too wise for so great a pleasure of life as laughter.'

To Fr. Burke's genial energy is due various pleasant picnics to Tivoli and Ostia, which the Irish and American bishops keenly enjoyed. Associated in the enterprise was Miss Wyse, the niece and future biographer of the late British Minister at Athens. Fr. Burke's friendship for this lady began under circumstances which may as well be mentioned. Years previously she had been inquiring for some able priest, capable of affording wise counsel, not on any case of conscience, but in relation to matters requiring the guidance of that most uncommon of gifts—common sense. People urged her to consult Fr. Burke; but the suggestion made little impression. Miss Wyse spoke to various ecclesiastics, but their replies were weak and wordy. At last, happening to hear Fr. Tom preach in Dominick Street Church, Dublin, she became so much struck by the

logical tone of his sermon, that after he had left the pulpit she entered the vestry, and ventured as an utter stranger to lay her case before him. Fr. Burke gave his opinion with such conciseness and strength, that in a moment all difficulties were smoothed, and she felt herself for life the debtor of the great Dominican. It was not until long afterwards that he heard who she was; but Fr. Burke was the most accessible of men, and ready, at all times, to pour balm into every bruised heart.

Their acquaintance gradually strengthened into friendship until Miss Wyse, finding at last her letters unanswered, some danger of it coming to an abrupt end seemed to loom. The lady was hurt, and let the Dominican know it. He soon appeared in person, threw himself upon her indulgence, and confessed—what he had never told another—that he had offered up three retreats in the fervent hope of being able to cure himself of a habit, doubtless indefensible, but which, though it gave him no end of trouble, he found it hopeless to mend.

If Miss Wyse when at Rome helped Fr. Tom to organise picnics for the bishops, he greatly enhanced their enjoyment by throwing around the fruit of his local lore. Well remembered was their trip to Ostia, a see founded in the time of the Apostles, and of which St. Cyriacus was first bishop. This once great seaport—the boldest triumph of Roman magnificence—fell before the Saracens; and that which once numbered near 8,000 inhabitants found in 1870 not quite a dozen; enough, however, to form the bishopric of a Cardinal deacon. Excavations were then in progress, disclosing every day fresh 'finds' of classic statuary. Fr. Burke seemed one moment like Marius moaning over the ruins of Carthage, the next found him full of fun and song. The party, after dining under the pines, strolled to the lovely beach. Who can forget the thrilling effect of the glee with which at eventide the Archbishop of Halifax and he sang—

I saw from the beach, when the morning was shining,
A bark o'er the waters move gloriously on,
I came when the sun o'er that beach was declining,—
The bark was still there but the waters were gone ?

The singers then went on to show, in the words of the poet, that 'such was the fate of life's early promise.' The waters, however, were not entirely gone. The habits of boyhood clung to Burke to the end, and some of the bishops were surprised to see him later on wading about in the blue Tyrrhenian sea.

Incidental to such trips a good deal of walking became necessary; and the portly physique of the Bishop of Kerry might be seen leading the van. He whose jurisdiction covered Mangerton, Aghadoe and MacGillicuddy's Reeks was not easily daunted. Bareheaded, and ever and anon passing a handkerchief across his beaded brow, Dr. Moriarty pursued the tenor of his way, tramping over Roman pavement—the site of early Christian marytrdom, and later of Cardinal Rovière's bloody rout of the French. Ostia grew in interest under Fr. Burke's rapid allusion to its history. So prosperous had it at one time become, that its suburbs touched Rome; but the one grand street that had erst united the two is now described as a road through a desert. Next day he waited upon Miss Wyse, and with a long face declared that her conscience was not clear. The crime of having killed a bishop rested upon it. Dr. Moriarty lay prostrate for a week after, sore in every joint, but aglow with pleasant thoughts. Another trip to Ostia discovered new points of interest, and Dr. Moriarty paid a compliment to the first by eagerly joining the party. Fr. Burke showed Mrs. Bishop the house where Monica, the mother of St. Augustine, died, and he is described as singing Moore's melodies the whole way back to Rome.

Mr. Arthur Moore, then Chamberlain to the Pope, belonged to a family with whom Fr. Burke was very intimate.

Crossing the Piazza di S. Pietro, one night, both sang with all the strength of their Irish lungs 'Tell me, ye shepherds.'

Mozart was his favourite (Miss Wyse writes in the notes she has been kind enough to make for our use), and it was quite a study to watch him listening with eager interest to one of his sonatas. I seldom heard a more sympathetic voice than Fr. Burke's. He gave us the 'Pilgrim of Love,' by Bishop, when asked to sing; and he put more soul into it than any one else I ever heard.

But the most touching thing I know was his singing of the Passion on Good Friday. He never missed it for years, and said it could not be Good Friday to him without it. Also the Prophecies, &c., on Holy Saturday; they sounded quite different when sung by him—he seemed to charge them so completely with the grandeur of their meaning.

Fr. Burke asked himself how it was that his race evinced such irrepressible love of song.

How are we to account for this? We must seek the cause of it in the remotest history. It is a historical fact that the maritime or sea-coast people of the north and west of Europe were, from time immemorial, addicted to song. In remote ages, the kings of our sea-girt island, when they went forth upon their warlike forays, were always accompanied by their minstrel, who animated them to deeds of bravery. Even when the Danes came sweeping down in their galleys upon the Irish coast, high on the prow of every war-boat sat the *Skald*, or poet—white-haired, heroic, wrinkled—the historian of all their national wisdom and their national prowess. And when sweeping with their long oars through the waves, they approached their foe, he rose in the hour of battle, and poured forth his soul in song, and fired every warrior to the highest deeds. Thus it was in Ireland, when Nial of the Nine Hostages bore down upon the coast of France and took St. Patrick, then a youth, prisoner; the first sounds that greeted the captive's ear were the strains of our old Irish harper celebrating in a language he knew not the glories and victories of heroes long departed.

Fr. Tom had jokes to suit every rank and walk in life. A Dublin Alderman happened to sit next him at dinner, and asked, after the singing had begun, if he knew anything

of the Messrs. Waters, who had been largely engaged in tanning. Difficulties had threatened their house; an accountant was sent down to examine their books and stock, consisting chiefly of bark, and he reported that there would be 20*s.* in the pound to pay every creditor, but he regretted to add that the principals had left the country. 'The bark was still there, but the Waters were gone,' commented Fr. Burke, as he quietly passed on to another topic.

As in the history of governments and parties there was always some *salon*, like that of the Duchess of Devonshire in 1789, where the Opposition found a social spot for reunion, one great rendezvous for the Inopportunists during the progress of the Vatican Council was the house of Mrs. Augustus Craven, authoress of 'Récit d'une Sœur.' [1]

The receptions held by Mgr. Dupanloup, Bishop of Orleans, every Sunday after breakfast were also important in their character. These took place at his elegant villa residence, and lasted from two to four o'clock. Mgr. Dupanloup greatly admired Burke's qualities of head and heart.

At the house of Mr. Macpherson charades with *tableaux vivants* were performed for the amusement of mainly clerical guests. Needless to say, there was no more enjoyable co-operator than Fr. Tom. Mrs. Macpherson was intellectual, and had written a Life of Mrs. Jameson. In the *salon* of Mrs. Charles Moore, the sister of the present writer, Fr. Burke was a prominent figure. Here he made some English visitors stare by attending her *soirées* in his habit, but they partook of the character of *conversazioni*. This lady belonged to the Ultramontane side, and after Pio Nono had been despoiled of his temporal power presented him with 1,000*l.* But it was necessary to meet Fr. Burke dining here on a quiet day to see him in the full openness of his boyish nature. One minute he

[1] Mrs. Craven states that she never received a letter from Fr. Burke; modestly adding, 'and although I admired and revered him so much, it was only like the many who heard him preach and were lost in the crowd that listened to him.'

would be a nun, with the dinner napkin on his head, gently whispering seraphic words; later on—especially when some younger persons joined the party—he was the greatest child of them all. 'He could make himself the ugliest man that ever lived,' observes Mr. J. W. O'Donnell, Chief Police Magistrate; but this recollection applies to an evening at Lord O'Hagan's. Fr. Burke admitted to Miss Moore that, after a full course of these facial fantastics, his face would be sore for days. Anon he would give samples of a retreat in broken English after the manner of Fr. Dominic, famous for having made a monk of the Hon. George Spencer, and of one far more illustrious, who is now an English Cardinal. In the following persiflage, Fr. Dominic is supposed to be addressing a community of nuns:—

You tink, my dear Shisters, dat de devil is only outside in de world. Nay, he is inside de convent too; but you never see much of him, only a bit of de tail. One nun says, 'I am of good familee, unlike So-and-so.' Ah! dere is a bit of de tail. Anoder says to herself, 'I have de good judgment, and am made de referee.' Here again de tail peeps out. Sometimes de temptation whispers, 'I am comely to view.' [Here Fr. Dominic would distort his face into a hideous expression of contempt as his eye swept the line of nuns.] But though de devil is the fader of lies, he would not go de length of saying dat.

It was the same good Father who, when announcing to a school a day of recreation, promised the children, 'Sheep tripes, and bones'—meaning cheap trips and buns.

Fr. Burke (observes our correspondent Mrs. Grehan) certainly realised the truth of what Faber has said of the advantage of a sense of humour, even in the spiritual life. All barriers of stiffness, human respect, self-consciousness, and conceit, broke down at once before the tide of his exuberant and overflowing spirits. The perfect confidence he inspired as if by magic brought many to higher things, who were at first only attracted by the charm of his wit and humour. 'A man,' says Newman, 'who divests himself of his own greatness, and puts himself on the level of his brethren, and throws himself

on the sympathies of human nature, and speaks with such simplicity and such spontaneous outpouring of heart, is forthwith in a condition both to conceive great love of them, and to inspire great love towards himself.'

An anecdote occurs to my mind (writes the Archbishop of Philadelphia). Several members of an old and wealthy American family had been received into the Catholic Church, and were temporarily residing in Rome, and became great friends of Father Tom. A very bigoted Presbyterian daughter-in-law of the lady at the head of the family arrived in Rome, and was told that Father Burke had been invited to spend the evening. 'I shall not call him *Father* Burke,' she said, 'because I acknowledge no spiritual paternity in a Catholic priest. I must call him Mr. Burke or Doctor Burke.' After the arrival of Father Tom in his monk's habit, he entered into conversation with this lady, of whose bigotry he had heard. She addressed him as *Doctor* Burke. 'Faith, madam,' said he, 'sure I'm not a doctor at all—I'm not even an *apothecary*!' The lady laughed heartily, and I believe Father Tom had the gratification of receiving her into the Church. Certain it is that she is now a most fervent Catholic.[1]

Fr. Burke, during the progress of the Vatican Council, had been one of the strongest of the Inopportunists who mustered at Rome. Unlike many other divines who have since received marked promotion, Fr. Burke made no disguise of his sentiments. These views were strengthened by constant association with Bishop Moriarty, whose deep theo-

[1] Letter of the Archbishop of Philadelphia to the Author, July 19, 1884. This eminent prelate is justly regarded as the greatest Catholic preacher now living. Referring to the saints of Ireland, his Grace, in a recent sermon, said: 'This subject formed a theme, many a time, for that great man and great patriot whose brain and heart rest for the last time and for the first—for he never rested until he went to the lowly grave at Tallaght,—the Dominican preacher and patriot whom I felt proud to call my friend, and whom you ought to love—who, when we are all forgotten, will be remembered for the divinity of genius, and that purity of intention, consecrated by supernatural motives, wherewith he proclaimed the truths of God, and for which he shall live in story and in the history of our people.' How completely Fr. Burke commanded the respect of the ecclesiastics who knew him best is further shown in the fact that the archbishop made a special pilgrimage to Tallaght, where, during rain and the piteous moan of the winter's wind, he knelt down bareheaded upon the grass-grown grave, and prayed for Fr. Burke's eternal repose.

logic lore, uncompromising attitude, and conclusive way of putting points left him more than once master of the situation. When at last the definition of the Infallibility had become inevitable, Fr. Burke waited upon his gifted friend, Mrs. Bishop, to say that he had received orders from his General, the Père Jandel, to be more guarded in his words and that she must try and forget all he had previously said. How intimate he was with this accomplished convert one anecdote will show. Among other recollections she gives us as an instance of his readiness as a preacher that one day, when she happened to go into the sanctuary of Santa Maria during his course of sermons, and just before his appearance in the pulpit, he said: 'I've only this minute come, and I'm debating in my mind what the theme shall be.' He always addressed this lady by her Christian name, and he now asked her to decide for him. She said, 'Let it be the Blessed Eucharist.' He passed straight to the pulpit, and spoke, she says, like one inspired. He dwelt on the Eucharist as the fulfilment of the designs of God, and likewise of all the wants of man.

Mrs. Bishop knows more of his inner life, and possessed more of his confidence than many ecclesiastics who were his frequent associates. One day he told her that the rock against which he was on his guard was vainglory, and hence his efforts to crush it by fostering an opposite feeling. The reader, in following his continued ovation in America throughout the next two years, would do well to bear these words in mind.

Mrs. Bishop of course knew him during his hours of relaxation also, and describes him as singing the best part of 'Don Giovanni,' accompanying himself on a guitar. He had a great admiration for Mozart's Masses, and said that after all there was nothing like them.[1]

During several successive sittings the question of the

[1] To Rev. F. A. Hickey, O.P.

Infallibility was discussed with great eloquence and power. On July 13, being the eighty-fifth General Congregation, the voting was—'Placet,' 451, and 'Placet juxta modum,' 62, while 88 declared themselves 'Non Placet.'

The Bishop of Kerry read aloud a passage from the Acts of the Apostles. 'It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay no farther burden upon you than these necessary things,' and, said the Bishop, 'a warning follows not to multiply, without great necessity, laws and definitions.' He pronounced the Councils of Ephesus and Rimini 'infamous in the history of the Church,' because the bishops, under threats of exile, basely betrayed their trust. Dr. Moriarty recognised with joy that peace reigned around while the Vatican Council sat, and that no secular threat could possibly influence it.

Dr. Moriarty's attitude was in some respects exceptional. Fr. Burke, three years later, thus looks back on the time:

> But when do we find the unity of the Church so strongly developed and shown as in the last General Council of the Vatican? Eight hundred Bishops from all ends of the earth were there. Never did the Catholic Church behold, assembled together, so great an array of mitred Prelates. Around these eight hundred Bishops were hundreds of learned men, philosophers, and theologians, filled with the stores of theological knowledge which the experience of eighteen hundred years had supplied. There they were, the Bishops of the Universal Church, no longer confined to this country or to that, but spread out over the whole world, speaking the language of every clime under the sun, arrayed in different costumes, with different habits, thoughts, and prejudices; and there in the midst of them stands the sceptred monarch of the Church of God, 'the grandeur of Pope Pius IX.'

Before the final vote was taken, forty-five of the dissentients had retired, including Archbishop Kenrick; twenty had received formal leave of absence; the Bishops of Dromore, Marianapolis, and Northampton were invalided; three died, Doctors Derry, Maccabe, and Grant, and at the last

division two prelates only voted 'Non Placet.' These were Dr. FitzGerald, Bishop of Little Rock, and Mgr. Riccio, Bishop of Cajazzo, Naples. The Vicar of Christ arose and uttered the magic words, 'Consummatum est.' The scene that followed was eminently striking. Acclamation ascended on every side. Old bishops—tears coursing down their cheeks with emotion—embraced each other, and gave thanks to God that they had lived to see that day. But to the dismay of the assembled Fathers, the Bishop of Little Rock, the youngest prelate in the world, stood up and enunciated two words which were supposed to repeat the refractory 'Non Placet.' Even during so solemn a scene some jokes were whispered, and one was 'See Little Rock opposing the Great Rock.' His Lordship's observation—seemingly indicative of opposition to a dogma already defined—caused painful perplexity, which was only allayed by the assurance that what he really did say was 'Nunc Placet.'[1] To correct the misapprehension he clasped his pectoral cross, and in a stentorian voice cried, 'Nunc credo et ego, nunc et ego firmiter credo!'

Riccio made his submission on his knees, and both prelates were at once received by the Pope with expressions of parental affection. The roar of ordnance without shook the Basilica and ten thousand cheers rent the air, while the joy bells of St. Peter's pealed their gladdest chime. On the same day Napoleon III. declared war against Prussia. Within a week every absent prelate reverently sent in his adhesion to the dogma.

We have seen that the Bishop of Dromore and his theologian Fr. Burke had been, in common with other able Dominicans, Inopportunists. They were of opinion that 'it was for the good of the Church to leave untouched the question of Infallibility.' One of the most powerful speeches made in sustainment of this view was by Cardinal Guidi, O.P.

[1] Oral statement of the late Cardinal Cullen.

Once, however, that the definition was made, the Cardinal, together with the Thomist Bishops and the Dominican General, Père Jandel, laid before the Pope, in the name of the entire Order, an address declaratory of the fervent faith with which they accepted the dogma. Fr. Jandel held the same rank as a bishop at the Council, in so far as he could vote, define, and subscribe.

The Bishop of Dromore and his theologian, after an absence of nearly seven months, had returned to Ireland before the conclusion of the Council. Fr. Burke's devotion to the Centre of Unity was not diminished by breathing once more an Irish atmosphere:

> The world now beholds the Church as Christ established her (he exclaimed), in all spiritual loveliness, in majesty, unity, and power. When it sees eight hundred of her bishops meeting in council, and all hearing the word of one man, and before that one bowing down as before the voice of God, they bear willing testimony to that wonderful unity of faith which is in the Church.

As to Bishop Moriarty, we learn from Fr. Burke when preaching his panegyric, that 'the last public act of his life was to forward to Rome the loving and generous tribute of himself and his ancient diocese,' and we learn both from his lips and his life that devotion to the Holy See is one of the strongest signs of the holy priest and the true Catholic. This great bishop, in addressing his flock, declared that, humanly speaking, he believed even with more reason in the decrees of the Vatican Council than he did in Trent, because the Church was more largely represented, and embraced bishops not only from the oldest churches in Christendom, but from Churches which did not exist, and from countries unknown, when the Council sat at Trent.

The name of Dr. Kenrick, Archbishop of St. Louis, has been mentioned on a previous page, and before leaving Rome an anecdote may here come in which he has told more than once. Shortly after the Infallibility of the Pope became

a dogma, the Archbishop found some difficulty in reconciling it to the mind of a convert lady in his diocese, and a visit to the Eternal City was suggested as a good mode of clenching her faith. She made her pilgrimage and had an interview with the Pope. Hearing that she was from St. Louis, he asked after the health of Dr. Rosati. This prelate—the first bishop of that See—had been in his grave for thirty-two years, and the lady returned to St. Louis with her faith in Papal Infallibility far from strengthened by the audience. Dr. Kenrick became coadjutor to Dr. Rosati in 1841, and two years later succeeded him. It may be added that the Vatican Council merely requires Catholics to believe that God protects the Pope from error in definitions on faith and morals, when, *ex cathedrâ*, he imposes a belief upon the Universal Church.

When Fr. Burke reached London he took an opportunity to visit the purlieus of Blackfriars, so called from the black cloak which Dominicans wear. Their grand old convent here, built in 1286, became the scene of some very interesting spectacles. Its erection was encouraged by the gift of two whole streets near St. Paul's, which the Corporation of London presented to the Black Friars. Successive Parliaments met in this house. Charles V. of Germany lodged here in 1522. It was here, too, that Cardinal Wolsey sat as judge in the case of Henry VIII., when Catherine of Aragon eloquently repudiated the jurisdiction of that Court. Fr. Burke found the exact site in Playhouse Yard where Shakspere's theatre was built with the *débris* of the Dominican Friary. The Bard of Avon had stood upon the very spot where Burke now stood. The same thoughts doubtless occurred to both, and probably suggested passages in 'Henry VIII.' worthy of Dominic himself. Amongst others:

> I charge thee, fling away ambition:
> By that sin fell the angels; . . . . .
> Love thyself last: cherish those hearts that hate thee.

On June 3, 1870, Fr. Burke was appointed Sub-Prior of St. Saviour's, Dublin. This year he preached the panegyrics of St. Dominic, St. Francis Assisi, and St. Laurence O'Toole, in Dublin. Other occasions which brought out his powers as a preacher were the dedication, on August 7, of the new Dominican Church at Newbridge, on the 14th of St. Anne's, Bohernabreena, and on the 24th the blessing of the bell on the relinquishment of the wooden chapel of St. Kevin. On September 4 he preached from the altar at Drogheda when the corner-stone of its new Dominican Church was laid by the Primate. But the grand incident of the year was the Triduum in celebration of the dogma of the Infallibility. Twelve prelates who had spoken at the Œcumenical Council attended in Marlborough Street to hear Fr. Burke preach an exhaustive discourse in explanation and defence of the decree.

Cardinal Cullen's restoration of certain grand functions and ceremonials of the Church in which it was our Dominican's lot to take a leading part is thus noticed by Fr. Burke in a sermon preached on the death of that Prelate:

> The order and magnificence of public worship in the old law, which was but the shadow of future blessings, was amply provided for by the Almighty, as we read in Leviticus. How much more must we consult for the worship in the new law, where God Himself is immediately present, where every movement prescribed to the ministers of the altar is an act of faith in that Awful Presence, derives its meaning from it, and is intended as a powerful aid to the faithful to realise the presence in a feeling spirit of adoration and love. Such scenes as these, with the Cardinal Archbishop as their centre, have we witnessed often in this great church, and our memory recalls them as amongst the happiest moments of our lives.

The Dublin people, like the Athenians of old, are fond of music and eloquence; and wherever Fr. Burke ministered they were sure to have both. At St. Saviour's his confessional was always crowded. The penitents were largely composed of artisans, but all classes met at that centre of attraction.

'When Luther arranged that henceforth men might live without confession, it was a terrible denial' (says Fr. Burke) 'of the greatest of earth's comforts.' After some lengthy remarks on its advantages, Fr. Burke added:

Thus it is that the voice in the confessional acts on society. If the whole world were Catholic, and all men consented to approach regularly the tribunal of penance, this alone would put an end to sin. There would be no more heart-breaking, no more tears, no more dark records of robberies and murders, no more women hardening their hearts and making them more ferocious than the tigress when she devours her young; no more of that cautious, cold, calculating dishonesty, men casting their wiles about each other like a web, to entrap each other; no misery in this world—all would be happiness if men would only open their festering souls and let in the salt of the power and the grace of Jesus Christ.[1]

The Dominicans have got the name of being very strict directors; but even by them Fr. Burke was deemed too rigorous in the confessional. *A propos* to this point the reader should see under the year 1879 Canon Brownlow's recollections of Fr. Burke as a confessor.

He sought, indeed, no popularity in the tribunal of penance by maintaining impassiveness, no matter what tale of sin transpired. Like an upright judge, he boldly interpreted the law that was outraged. His uncompromising theology worked great good. We catch a glimpse of it in words which deserve to be recorded.

Thus it is that from the confessional spring those virtues by which man acts upon his fellow-man. The index virtue is purity; and the next virtue in relation to our fellow-man is honesty. The third is charity; and behold how the confessional acts here. If a man speaks badly of his neighbour, if he ruins that neighbour's character or reputation, if he gets that neighbour thrown out of some lucrative employment by his whisperings or his tales, he goes to confession, and says, 'I am sorry for my sin;' but he finds, perhaps, to his astonishment that the priest will say to him, 'There is another difficulty.' Until you make good that man's character there is no

[1] *The Confessional: its Effect on Society.* Printed in America only.

absolution for you; until you have retracted there is no pardon for you; until you have restored to your neighbour the fair name and fame of which, by your whispering and enmity and injustice, you have robbed him, there is no heaven for you. What greater, what stronger motive could there be to make a man guard his words, to preserve him from detraction, to make him measure well his words before he inflicts an injury on his neighbour, when he knows if he gives way to this mean envy or enmity, if he says these things or publishes them, even though men may forget, God will not forget it in the interest of his neighbour! 'To Communion,' this man must say, 'I cannot go, nor can I enter heaven until I have gone out and eaten the lie that I have told.'

He often said that all courts of law could do was to send the robber to prison. The Church alone so lays hold of the thief that it enables those who were plundered to get their own again. Later on, addressing an American audience, he said: 'I say it is within my own knowledge, as indeed of every priest actively engaged on the mission, that sums amounting in the aggregate to something enormous are constantly being restored through the confessional.'

As a spiritual director of men of the world Fr. Burke had no easy time of it. Men who would bend the knee to no other priest made special pilgrimages to his 'box.' It will surprise many to learn that on such occasions he did not hesitate to press into the service of God his powers of wit and humour; and if we did not find this statement made by the Jesuit Fathers with whom he constantly associated as a consultant and genial friend, we should be slow to record it:—

As in the pulpit so in the confessional (we are told), his exuberant power of fun was of great advantage to him. He was at once *en rapport* with his penitents. He buoyed them up with his own wondrous buoyancy of heart, he turned their thoughts away from themselves by his dashes of well-timed humour, he filled the most diffident with confidence, he introduced thoughts of heaven and aspirations after God in such a genial and natural way that virtue became attractive to those who had before shrunk from it, and

religion could not fail to seem full of cheerfulness and joy when spoken of by one who was himself so cheery and joyous.[1]

Fr. Burke's fame as a great priest was now in its zenith. The wavering sought his aid as well as the sick. Sometimes he is found receiving converts, at other times drying the tears of repentance by the bed of death.

'Were you ever called upon to attend any sick person who declined the Sacraments or refused to let the thought of death near them?' he was asked by his old school-fellow John Brady. Fr. Burke replied, 'The friends of a young married woman, knowing the danger of her position, had, with the parochial priest, vainly urged her to prepare for death. At last they begged of me to go. She was a beautiful girl with long tresses of golden hair. Her heart seemed set upon the vanities of the world, and I merely whispered, "I don't say you are going to die, but, my child, what harm can it do you to receive the rites of Holy Church?" This tone being different from that in which she was previously addressed, she yielded, and made her confession. When I saw her again she wore the sweetest expression of resignation. I called a third time and found her dead.'

The circumstances under which he was summoned were as varied as the changes of the kaleidoscope. In St. Paul's, Brooklyn, U.S., March 3, 1872, he mentioned how he had stood by the bedside of a man whose physician had just brought him through six long days of delirium tremens:

The doctor said to him, 'As sure as God created you, if you touch alcohol for the next week you will be a dead man!' I was trying to see if the poor fellow would go to confession. A flask of brandy stood near him on the table, for they had had to give it to him. While the doctor was yet speaking, I saw his eyes fastened on it and the hand creeping up towards it; and if ever you saw a hungry horse or mule looking at oats, it was he, when, with his eyes devouring the bottle, he reached out, clutched it, and put it to his head, after hearing that, as surely as God made him, so surely would he die if he drank of it! He could not help it. Where, then, was that man's freedom? It had perished in the habit of sin.

[1] *The Month* [edited by a Jesuit Father], September, 1883. Fr. Burke had *sobriquets* for most of his penitents. One lady he always accosted as 'Pilgrim.'

Dr. Shannon once attended a tedious and critical case of illness in conjunction with Fr. Burke, who offered his spiritual ministrations. Both were sitting in an ante-room with the sister of the patient, when she at length broke a solemn pause by the remark, 'After all, I would rather be a priest than a doctor.' 'Then you would find it easier to preach than to practice,' was Fr. Burke's ready rejoinder.

A book more curious and instructive than 'The Diary of a Late Physician' might be compiled from the materials which have survived Fr. Burke. These reminiscences of the dead and dying are found scattered through his sermons; a few are now given—more are reserved.

Curran once said to Fr. O'Leary, 'I wish you were St. Peter, for then you could let me into heaven.' 'It would be better to have the key of the other place,' was the reply, 'for then I could let you out.' Fr. Burke in graver mood repeatedly told his hearers that the golden key which opens the gate of heaven is mercy. Christ will say, 'As you are merciful to the poor you are merciful to Me. I have said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy."'

Preaching on the 'Attributes of Catholic Charity,' he said:

Nowhere without the pale of the Catholic Church do you find charity organised. You may find a fair ebullition of pity, here and there, as when a rich man dies and leaves, perhaps, thousands to found an hospital. But it is an exceptional thing, as when some grand lady, magnificent of heart and mind—like Florence Nightingale—devotes herself to the poor and goes into the hospitals. If you travel out of the bounds of that fair and beautiful compassion that runs in so many hearts, and go one step farther into the cold atmosphere of State aid, there is not one vestige of true charity there; it becomes political economy. The State believes it is more economical to pick up the poor from the streets and lanes, to take them from their sick beds, transferring them into poor-houses and hospitals, and there, overwhelming them with the miserable pity that patronizes, making its gifts a curse and not a blessing, by breaking the heart whilst it relieves the body. Such is 'State charity.' I

remember once in Dublin I got a sick call. It was to attend a poor woman. I went and found in a back lane a garret room. I climbed up to the place. There I found, without exaggeration, four bare walls, and a woman seventy-five years of age, covered with a few squalid rags, and lying on the floor—not as much as a little straw had she under her head. I asked for a cup to give her a drink of water. There was no such thing to be had; and there was no one there to give it. I had to go out and beg amongst the neighbours, until I got the loan of a cupful of cold water. I put it to her dying lips. I had to kneel down upon that bare floor to hear that dying woman's confession. The hand of death was upon her. What was her story? She was the mother of six children—a lady, educated in a lady-like manner—a lady beginning her career of life in affluence and in comfort. The six children grew up. Some married, some emigrated. But the weak and aged mother was abandoned. And now she was literally dying, not only of the fever that was upon her, but—of starvation! As I knelt there on the floor, and as I lifted her grey-haired head upon my hands, I said, 'Let me, for God's sake, have you taken to the workhouse hospital; at least you will have a bed to lie upon!' She turned and looked at me. Two great tears came from her dying eyes, as she said, 'Oh, that I should live to hear a priest talk to me about a poor-house!' I felt that I had stabbed this already broken heart. On my knees I begged her pardon. 'No,' she said, 'let me die in peace!' And there, whilst I knelt at her side, her chastened spirit passed away to God—but the taint of the 'charity of the State' was not upon her.

If it was his lot to witness too often the drunkard's death, he had the happiness, at least in one instance, of hearing joyous news. Andrew Lynch, Fr. Burke's oldest friend, gives us the following instance of his wit. A gentleman with whom Fr. Burke was well acquainted indulged so freely that the priest bemoaned his state to a common friend. 'Oh, he's quite reformed, and has now joined our rowing club.' 'Then he has given up Jameson and taken to Roe,' replied Fr. Burke, alluding to the two great distillers, but inwardly ejaculating 'Deo Gratias!'

Some of the painful scenes described by Fr. Burke were also witnessed by less demonstrative Dominicans. When

spending the evening with the community, Fr. Burke, to relieve their minds and his own, often personated as many characters as Charles Mathews the elder. He was once mimicking the precise and polished Russell, Provincial of the Order, when to his confusion he found him standing at his elbow, having entered the room unobserved. He would not only mimic some of his most distinguished colleagues of the cowl, but for several he had nicknames. One voluntarily over-worked Father he called 'the maid-of-all-work,'[1] the skirts of his habit as they flitted rapidly past not weakening the simile. The energy of this zealous worker knew no rest; he rarely sat down to take a meal—a crust of bread in the hand as he hurried to overtake some task of the hour serving him for refreshment.

One day, as Fr. Burke emerged from his convent, accompanied by a distinguished friend who addressed him with much animation, he failed to heed an old crone who begged for alms. Losing temper, she exclaimed, 'Ah! you're all for the rich. Fr. Eustace, the darlin', he's the man for the poor.' 'Of course you gave her a flea in her ear?' said a priest to whom he told the incident. 'I hadn't even a flea,' replied Fr. Burke.

In speaking of the human and natural side of the argument in favour of confession, Fr. Burke more than once recurred to the great relief it was to find a friend to whom a man might throw off the burden of his soul, just as Simon lifted the Cross from the shoulders of Christ. But where were we to seek a man on whose honour and secrecy we could rely?

It is very hard to find such a man. I do not speak at all of finding a woman. I remember once I was going to preach a sermon in Dublin one Sunday for some charity, and they came to me at

[1] Fr. Burke, though fond of nicknames, never gave an unkind one unless to a public character, and we know no second instance in which it occurred. At a time when Bismarck was imprisoning bishops and priests, he called him 'Beastsmark.' See lecture on 'The Church and Civil Government,' Waterford, 1875.

the last minute and said, 'Will you preach on Sunday? We want money for this thing or that.'

'Very well,' said I. It was on Friday.

'But,' said they, 'there is no time to publish it.'

'Oh,' I said, 'do you leave it to me, I'll publish it.' And I went to a lady friend of mine and said, 'I want to tell you a secret. They have asked me to preach on Sunday at such a place, but I would not have it known.' 'Ah,' said she, 'I am the soul of honour.' I went away. I came back that road in about half an hour, and I met four or five people on the way. 'Well, Father Tom, you are going to preach at a certain place on Sunday.' There was not a paving stone in Dublin that did not hear it. There is our first great difficulty to find a reliable friend.

It seems almost inconsistent in God—if I may so say—to have given to man such a nature, such a heart, that he cannot bear his own sorrows alone, and yet to make the true friends so difficult to find.

Until about ten years before his death, when he ceased attendance, Fr. Burke—his collar buttoned up to avoid observation—was yet a familiar figure at concerts and public readings. How often have his more domestic brethren been amused with imitations of what he heard, especially of a Shaksperian elocutionist whose readings were ever and anon interrupted by the yelping of a cur dog! 'I have seen him wrapt almost in ecstasy,' writes Fr. Murphy, 'as he sat in a public hall when the artist went through the creations of the great masters and the grand music thrilled the very air.'

Mr. Kennedy, who is known in the musical world, happened to sit next him during a concert. Though not previously acquainted, they exchanged observations, more especially in reference to one song which Fr. Burke seemed most anxious to hear. Encores had retarded the progress of the programme, but just as that part was reached to which both had eagerly looked forward, he rose to leave, whispering in reply to an expression of surprise, 'Ordered to be home by ten.'

'In the year 1871,' writes his friend and Provincial, the

Very Rev. J. T. Towers, 'he preached 172 sermons and gave 21 retreats. With him a retreat was four sermons for seven days, so that in one year he spoke publicly about 700 times.' Among those retreats was one at Maynooth for ecclesiastical students, which made many uneasy consciences. He depicted with such strength and vividness the grave responsibility involved in the priestly state that not a few drooped under the fear of personal unworthiness. His appeals awakened a still higher spirit of asceticism in pursuit of their sacred calling. He warned them of the dangers which would attend their absence from college during the recess, and urged them to guard with equal vigilance their vocation and their vacation. He begged them to avoid the fashionable 'sea-side,' where he had known most promising students to form acquaintances which afterwards led to a friendly letter that bore unseen the germ of romantic mischief. Some of these dangers Florentius, the master of à Kempis, had already pointed out to his novices.

Among his discourses this year were two dedication sermons —one on May 21, in the Parochial Church, Donegal; the other in the south, for the Bishop of Ferns. This latter is noticed in the MS. diary of the Bishop of Clogher:

1871. *June* 25, *Sunday.*—Met Fr. Burke at Ramsgrange, co. Wexford. Sermon a masterpiece. I was celebrant at a Pontifical High Mass, the Bishop of Ferns assisting on the throne. The crowd immense. Dinner in the evening; some short speeches and songs, and countless jokes from Fr. Burke, until at 11 P.M. he went off with Sir James Power a drive of twenty-six miles to Edermine.

August 15.—He preached at the laying of the foundation stone of St. Michael's, Enniskillen. Many Protestants present. I forget in what *rôle* I assisted, whether as celebrant at the Mass or merely as bishop of the diocese. Collection about 1,000*l.* Fr. Tom chock-full of fun all that day and following day. Three interruptions to his sermon—two by people fainting away, and a third by a noisy intruder who had to be removed.

August 16.—Profession of two nuns in the Convent of Mercy, Enniskillen. Fr. Tom preached later on that day. There was an

excursion organised and started down Lough Erne in a small steamer. The excursionists formed a large party, of which Fr. Tom was the sun and centre. All kinds of fun. One great incident of the trip was the *trial* of a priest present on board who had rendered himself somewhat disagreeable, on a charge of horse-stealing! Fr. Tom acted as Attorney-General in the prosecution, and displayed great powers of eloquence in his address to the jury. A verdict was given against the prisoner, and a severe sentence passed.[1]

All the officers quartered in Enniskillen attended the sermon. Major Esmonde White, the only Catholic in the regiment, was glad to observe the favourable impression produced by the manner in which Fr. Burke discharged his delicate task. After the solemn function of the day, Major White met him at dinner. 'The evening was one roar of fun from six till ten.'

A general chapter of the Dominican Order was held this year at Ghent, and Thomas Burke, like Thomas Aquinas at the chapter in Holborn, was deputed to attend it as 'definitor.' His duty, as 'L'Année Dominicaine,' states, was 'to revise the Constitutions.' This passage some persons read as altering or amending the Constitutions. But it would require three general chapters to change a Constitution, and Fr. Burke's duty was to revise a new edition of that invaluable book. The work of revision formed, however, but a small part of his programme. Fr. Sablon says that the chapter in its discussions resembled a parliament. He describes Fr. Burke as working so hard that he had barely time while it lasted to swallow his dinner. An occasional run upon the ramparts, with a view of the quaint old city built on twenty-six islands and united by three hundred bridges, was pleasant and bracing.

'In the Chapter of 1871,' writes Fr. Sablon, 'it was remarkable that of all the Fathers there assembled the merriest were the two best preachers of our Order—Fr. Burke, the

[1] MS. Diary of the Bishop of Clogher.

Definitor from Ireland, and Fr. Monsabré, the Socius to the Definitor for France.'[1]

During this autumn we find Fr. Burke preaching in Dominick Street, Dublin,[2] both morning and evening, a series of farewell sermons previous to his departure for America.

The church (writes the late W. J. Battersby) was crowded to its utmost capacity by a congregation who hung with sorrow and pride on the last accents of the gifted preacher—sorrow that Ireland should lose, even for a season, the services of one whose wondrous and winning eloquence was familiar throughout the length and breadth of the land, and pride in anticipation of the added lustre which the display of his genius in another hemisphere would be sure to reflect on the land of his birth.

There is a poor community of nuns in a southern suburb of Dublin whom he had often visited to advise, to cheer, or to console. The Rev. Mother has pointed out to us the granite step on which Fr. Burke, in calling at this time to bid them farewell, knelt down to ask the blessing of a Sister whom he esteemed. She herself did not witness the incident, but the Sister, who is still there, told her of it with wonder.

Before starting for America he repaired to Galway in order to receive from his aged parents what might prove a last embrace and blessing. Visiting Tuam, he became the honoured guest of 'the lion of the fold of Judah.' We find in an American journal, the *Western Watchman*, a speech delivered by Fr. Burke one year later in reply to the health of Archbishop MacHale. This toast was proposed at a dinner given to Fr. Burke by the Knights of St. Patrick at St.

[1] Letter of Very Rev. P. Sablon, O.P., Definitor for England at Ghent, to the Author, April 20, 1885.

[2] On investigating the title of the ground on which the Dominican Church now stands in Dominick Street, Dublin, it appears that the street derives its name, not from the Dominicans, as many people assume, and has been publicly alleged, but from Christopher Dominick, the grandfather of Emilia St. George, who married, Nov. 4, 1775, William Duke of Leinster. She was a great heiress, and inherited, with other wealth, the property of Christopher Dominick, whose house and demesne adjoined the site of the present Dominican Church. The Duke of Leinster still retains a residence in Dominick Street.

Louis, Missouri. What he said we venture to press into the mosaic of his life:

At this very time twelvemonth, just one week before I started for America, I spent eight days in the company of that venerable man, and every morning at six o'clock, rain or shine, there was the aged Archbishop, his white hair falling like the untrodden snow over his shoulders, observed in prayer at the foot of the Cross before the altar of the Cathedral of Tuam. Well do I remember having preached in his presence, not without fear and trembling, and returning with him, clad in my Dominican habit, into his house, and the old man sitting in the corner of his room, pulled out his Irish harp, and flinging open his purple soutane, and shaking his aged head, he drew his trembling fingers over the strings, and with his grey eye uplifted in inspiration, and mild with tears, he applied his whole heart to the accompaniment of that lyre; and it seemed to me as if I beheld Brian the Brave as he sat in his tent on the morning of Clontarf, and invoked the God of battles by the sound of his Irish harp.

'He never wore purple,' said Canon Ulick Burke to Fr. Tom some years after. 'Well, if he didn't, he ought to have worn it,' was the reply.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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